

THE BOAT RACE AND THE SPORTS (Illustrated).  
THE BLACK-HEADED GULL (Illustrated). By Robert Gurney.

# COUNTRY LIFE

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ALICE HUGHES

THE COUNTESS OF STAIR.

104, Ebury Street, S.W.



# COUNTRY LIFE

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## EDITORIAL NOTICE

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## DOWN HORN, UP CORN

DOWN Horn, Up Corn, is the motto which Sir Thomas Middleton suggests in the weighty article he contributes to the new number of the Journal of the Board of Agriculture for the guidance of British farmers during the period of reconstruction and poverty that must follow war. He defines the meaning as that "they should reduce expenditure on the products of live stock and increase expenditure on the direct products of the soil." In a paragraph or two he gives a swift summary of the condition of things before the War. This nation was then rich and could afford to buy its grain from abroad. Doing so suited the commercial needs of the nation because the ships which carried grain one way carried manufactured produce the other, a system that suited very well when freights were low. The standard of living, too, had gone up and beef and mutton had become common articles of diet, and oatmeal and potatoes were less freely used than they had been. When the War broke out very few consumers knew that we grew at home only food enough for the week-end. The home supply was just sufficient to keep us going from 6 p.m. on Friday till 10 p.m. on Monday in each week. There is no substantial change to-day. The population is cheerfully content "with a week-end supply assured from our own land." In the later years of the last century farmers believed strongly in the motto reversed. They said, "Up Horn, Down Corn." Sir Thomas Middleton recognises that there will be a considerable difficulty in getting them to

change at the present moment. They will only retort that prices for cattle are higher than they have ever been before, but if they give careful consideration to the case he presents they will probably come to the conclusion that the policy which answered well in the 'seventies is unsuited to the times that have to be faced now.

There is a great deal of the article which deserves reading although we must pass it over here. We refer to the very interesting explanation given of the methods of estimating food requirements of a nation; the statistics in regard to the chief farm products of the United Kingdom, and other matters of that kind. We pass these by in the meantime in order to emphasise the conclusion at which the writer arrives, namely, that the number of persons maintained by a hundred acres of average grassland before the War was nearer seventeen than twenty, whereas the plough land was feeding at least eighty-four people.

Another striking illustration of the argument is that "the population we were feeding from our own soil in the period 1909-13 was little greater than it was a century before, and it was substantially less than it was seventy-five years ago. In the period 1801-10 the soil of the United Kingdom fed about sixteen and a half millions, and in the period 1831-40 about twenty-four and a half millions," while the estimate of Sir Thomas Middleton is that in the years 1909-13 the number was only seventeen and a half millions. The country does not realise the truth about this state of affairs because there has been a new distribution of wealth owing to the War, and many people can afford to pay high prices without much feeling the pinch, but the pressure is increasing and will be felt more and more as time passes. The amount of taxation that has had to be paid this year has already had an effect on the householder. It has been accompanied by a continual rise in prices which earning power is slow to overtake. The cost of transport is ever becoming a more formidable burden. It affects not only the price of foodstuffs brought into this country, but also the feeding stuffs for livestock. There is very little likelihood of these charges being decreased for a long time to come.

The moral of it is unanswerable. It is that we must strain every effort to bring home production up to a high level. Sir Thomas Middleton says that if he were ordered to grow twenty-one millions of acres of corn in the United Kingdom he would need for the purpose forty-three to forty-five million acres of arable land; but as there are less than forty-seven million acres of cultivated land available it would obviously be impossible to find forty-three million acres for the purpose. He passes from that to a more practical suggestion. Suppose that another war were to occur, could we by profiting from the experience of 1914-18 take such steps to increase production as would stave off the possibility of our being starved? The answer is by no means despairing. In order to provide the minimum ration of bread and leave a sufficiency for farm horses, cows and other essential livestock, it would be necessary to grow about fourteen million acres of corn. The allocation of that area is five million acres to wheat, two and a half million acres to barley, and three millions to oats, for human food, and another three millions to oats for live stock, with half a million to barley for brewing or munitions. Ireland could make a contribution of two million acres, so that twelve million acres would be required within Great Britain. Now, in 1918 cereals were grown on 7,080,000 acres in England and Wales and 1,370,000 in Scotland, or 8,450,000 acres in all. That would leave to be secured in Great Britain an additional acreage of three and a half million acres, which should prove no impossible task.

## Our Frontispiece

A PORTRAIT of the Countess of Stair is given on the front page of this week's issue of COUNTRY LIFE. Lady Stair, who is a daughter of Colonel Frederick Henry Harford, was married in 1904, and has three sons and two daughters.

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## COUNTRY NOTES



THERE is no country in the world in which the vigour and gaiety of youth could have been more splendidly expressed than it was in the England of last week-end. Everywhere some kind of sport was going on, and it took many forms. Rowing, racing, football were the order of the day. Everybody who could get away seemed to be out looking on. To say that good humour prevailed is a very mild description of the high spirits of the various crowds. A foreign observer might have thought, "Here is a country which has no anxiety, no cause for depression." That, however, is not quite an accurate way of putting it. The Englishman has the habit of ever becoming more joyous when he knows that a hard and difficult task is before him. The very men who were shouting in the shouting crowd were those who, each in his own way, had been grappling and was going back to grapple with some difficulty of the hour. But where instinct tells them that, hard as may be the task, its accomplishment in the end is no matter for doubt. In all the welter of discussion and argument, grumbling and fault-finding, the reorganisation of the country goes steadily on, and in his heart of hearts the young citizen feels that the dangers of the present hour will be surmounted and overcome as surely as were those of the past. The gaiety so manifest at sportive gatherings is no more than a reaction from the concentrated endeavour that is occupying the hours of everybody.

THE University Boat Race illustrates better, perhaps, than any other athletic contest the Englishman's real passion for watching any form of sport or game or race. Last Saturday saw thousands upon thousands of Londoners waiting hours beforehand by the river bank to watch the boats flash past them for a second or two. The scene at Hammersmith Broadway just after the race when the crowds were trying to melt away almost defies description. Yet, of all those people very few had any connection with either Oxford or Cambridge, knew anything at all of the art of rowing or ever even sat in a boat. Unkind critics have said of this year's crews that a good head of the river crew would have beaten either of them comfortably. Doubtless the best pre-war standard was not reached for rowing, though it does not need the life-long apprenticeship of ball games, yet cannot be learnt in a year or so. Whatever their exact merits, the crews put up a good enough race to please the crowds and, though winning the toss meant much to them and their enemies had some cruelly rough water to encounter, Cambridge seemed on the whole distinctly the better, and deserved to win.

THE Sports can never be the popular festival that the Boat Race is, but on Saturday last they were probably the better worth seeing of the two. They will be

remembered by reason of a great race and a great runner. There have been great quarter-mile races before—Macaulay, Tindall, Jordan, Fitzherbert, McMillan—here are illustrious names. But never has there been a better than the race between Butler of Cambridge and Rudd of Oxford, which ended in a dead heat in 49 3-5secs. To see Butler come striding up to Rudd's shoulder as they turned into the straight, catch him, hold him for a while, and actually lead by inches, and then to see Rudd come again with a supreme effort and both men run themselves right out; here, indeed, were ten crowded seconds or so of glorious life. This was only one of Rudd's achievements. He ran a fine hundred, only losing by inches to Abrahams, who did rosecs. dead in an unfavourable wind. He performed creditably in the long jump, though this seemed an almost unnecessary exertion. Finally, with the score of the two sides even and everything hanging on the last race, he ran a beautiful half mile and beat a good and fresh runner in Mountain of Cambridge. Well might Oxford swoop on him and carry him off the ground. The Sports can show few such personal triumphs in their history.

WE have had many robberies of motors and by men in motors in this country, but nothing quite so audacious as that which occurred on Sunday in France. The story reads like a chapter from a shilling shocker. Four thieves issued from Paris in a motor lorry and a torpedo car, apparently for the express purpose of looting a train in a siding not far from Aubrais Station. They had begun to loot a truck containing war material when they were discovered by watchers equipped with portable telephones. On being disturbed the robbers at once opened fire. Help was obtained from the station in order to cut them off from their car, but they managed to get away and made all possible speed along the road to Paris. As it happens, the road runs parallel with the line, and gendarmes having been informed, a squad arrived at the railway station, jumped on to an engine and gave chase. The fugitives were brought up at Artenay by finding the road barred with carts and vehicles. Then ensued a fight in the darkness. The thieves took to the fields, leaving one dead man behind and a prisoner, in the person of the car driver. The two remaining fugitives were found in a restaurant at Péronville, when another fight took place, and one man was killed in the cafe.

### KAMAKURA GARDENS.

Where are the Queens who used to be  
Under the pines, under the moon?  
Here, where the gardens slope to the sea,  
Where are the Queens who used to be?

Silks are tatters and swords are rust,  
Great days ended and old words said.  
Here are only the pines and the dead moon,  
And the night winds driving a wisp of dust,  
And the Queens——?

But the Queens are dead.

K. C. G.

"NO sun upon an Easter Day did ever shine so bright," said or sang Suckling in a famous ballad to the spring. Whatever be the fortune of the weather this year, the sun will shine upon a glory of blossom that could not well be surpassed. At the time of writing it is at the full in the case of the blackthorn, though one does not look at this tree without remembering the bodeful warning, "as long as the blackthorn is in bloom winter is not away." Some of the country people have been recently expressing this sentiment in their own words at church and market, when they say the weather is too good to last, it is only lent, and we will have to pay back every day. Everything is coming soon this year, and the first white is becoming visible on the wild cherries which soon will be dressed in their spring gowns. The gorse is as yellow as it usually is in May or June. Garden trees, pear and apple and plum, have either put forth their blossom already or are at the point of doing so. Flowers which one does not expect to see till April is well advanced have been blooming for

weeks. Primroses, which often the devotees of Beaconsfield seek in vain on April 19th, are beautifying the field hedge-roots. The bluebells are coming on, and so are the cowslips, while the violet has been "freaked with jet" for several weeks. If only the sun will shine, Easter this year will delight all who love nature.

MR. WILLIAM A. HAVILAND'S address to the Farmers' Club on Monday was as moderate and as reasonable as could be desired. We are glad to notice that in times when the owner receives a good deal of criticism this expert had something to say in his favour. He pointed out that the landowner's financial position is at present deplorable. Speaking generally, he receives rents fixed at a low pre-war rate while his expenses of upkeep have gone up threefold, and the future holds out little or no hope to him. As a matter of necessity he must put up the rents to his sitting tenants, because if he does not the estate will be run at a loss. Then he has every justification for believing that he will be excluded from any share in the benefits which may arise from the increase in price of agricultural commodities. Is it to be wondered at, asks Mr. Haviland, if in the circumstances he accepts the value which the community sets upon him and his class and takes the present opportunity of placing his land on the market and of putting it at the disposal of those who, wisely or unwisely, are anxious to take his place and relieve him of his obligations? Mr. Haviland is not particularly hopeful about the small owner either. He recalls the familiar fact that economic pressure in the past pushed him out, and this is not unlikely to occur again. In any long period of unremunerative prices the man without capital is more in danger of going to the wall than the man who possesses it.

FRANCE, even more than Great Britain, is feeling the need of becoming a self-contained country. The depreciation of the English sovereign is a very slight thing as compared with that of the franc. At the time of writing the rate of exchange is over fifty-seven. It has been suggested that the French might arrest this disastrous movement by developing their imports. The iron-beds in Briey and the potash-beds in Alsace are assets of which more use might be made. There is a scarcity of potash in the world, and this country would welcome a considerable supply. An agitation has been got up to stop imports; but then, the recovery of France depends largely on her manufactures, and for these raw material is essential. Unless it is maintained the mills and factories must be idle. We do not know how far the immense invasion of France by tourists this Eastertide will affect the state of affairs. Certainly the French are not omitting to take full toll of the tourists, as everything—rooms, food, drink, and the mementoes that tourists buy, have all gone up immensely, even when the value is reckoned in francs.

WHAT one would like to know about the desire of the Directors of the Underground Railway to raise the fares is whether it is not possible for them to obtain a larger revenue by doing more to earn it. A little while ago the stations were full of appeals to the public to wait with patience while carriages were being built for its better accommodation; but no signs of this increase are yet visible. If each train were considerably augmented, the cost of transport per individual would be automatically lowered, and, of course, that is the most satisfactory method of meeting increased expenses. There is a little balance-sheet shown on the stations, at the top of which the railways are represented as falling into a plate of soup cunningly placed between largely increased expenses on the one hand and slightly increased income on the other. Yet, the trains, lifts and stations are so overcrowded that anyone who can avoid using them does so. More accommodation would attract far more passengers and probably bring about that better dividend which the Directors legitimately desire and need.

SUMMER-TIME began on Sunday, March 28th, and it may now be regarded as a settled institution. People have had experience of what it means to start work an hour earlier in the morning and to leave off an hour earlier in

the evening. They find it healthy, economical and profitable. During the months that are coming—especially April, May, June and July—the most delightful part of the day is the morning. Those who have cultivated the habit of early rising wonder how it is that so many can afford to spend in bed those cool, pleasant hours before the sun has attained its power. At no other time is the garden so attractive. At no other time do the birds sing so sweetly. Country people have, of course, always been accustomed to get up early, and late amusement was probably the main cause why townfolk fell into the opposite habit. But the institution of summer-time has had the effect of teaching all of them what gain there is in making use of an extra hour of daylight during the best months of the year.

#### RACHEL WEeping.

We follow in Thy footsteps, lame and late,  
Stumbling and falling where the Saints have trod,  
Not as the sport of some malignant fate,  
Not as the playthings of a spiteful God . . .  
But comfort us a little as we weep,  
Till Thou hast given Thy beloved sleep,  
Outside the ivory gate.

\* \* \* \* \*  
The darkness on my pillow falls,  
Once more, unwatched, I watch alone,  
And to the darkness make my moan.  
Now I can ease the aching pain,  
Till the day's burden pain recalls,  
And I must take it up again.  
On time's lone waste recedes the wave,  
Once more I see Love's Shining One  
Draw back the dreadful curtain of the grave,  
Reveal again my son.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Plead for your ransomed soul, my child, no more  
But as the vision passes and you leave  
The nearer limit of the heavenly shore  
And seek enchanted gardens whence you came  
Where no regret your tender heart can grieve  
One supplication from the dark receive—  
To breathe your mother's name.

And Thou, unmindful of our vain pursuit,  
Mysterious guardian of the sacred dead,  
Taking the dross to give the gold instead—  
Gathering flowers not ripened into fruit—  
Hiding life's secret from sad eyes that scan  
The silent blue in vain—too far, too far—  
What mortal mind can see immortal man  
Crowned in the morning star? . . .

As endless æons roll through gloom and glare,  
Till men with all their woe have passed  
Thro' life's ordeal into rest at last,  
Make him each hour inevitably Thine,  
But listen to a broken mother's prayer—  
Who cannot clearly pray,  
But only feebly say,

"Remember, Saviour of the World, that he was mine."

FRANCIS NEWBOLT.

SIR ROBERT BADEN-POWELL'S effort to secure better fingerposts in the villages will receive the sympathetic support of everybody who has roamed either on wheels or on foot through his favourite county. There is a rich diversity in the road indicators that already exist. Some of them give the distance and directions and repeat this information at every new turning. Others are only found at the main cross-roads and do more to perplex than assist the traveller. If a uniform and intelligible system could be adopted all over the country it would be of great assistance. But Sir Robert goes further than that, and in the right direction. He has instructed his Boy Scouts to collect information about the villages. Nearly every one of them has an interest of its own. It may be a church or almshouses, a school, or there may be some memory of a battle or other occurrence. The traveller, especially the motorist when he has met with a punctured tyre or some other mishap, would be very glad indeed to know the points of interest of any village at which he is compelled to stop.



# IMPRESSIONS of the GRAND NATIONAL

A WINNER OF GREAT MERIT.



THE START FOR THE GRAND NATIONAL.

It was altogether an amazing Grand National Steeplechase. The splendid performance of that wonderful Irish horse, Troytown, the presence of the King, the indescribable miseries inflicted by perfectly horrible weather, and the vast crowd—these distinguishing features will long make the 1920 celebration memorable. The course was soft and holding long before racing started, but it was made positively dreadful by the rain which set in deluge-fashion just before the start and really never abated until the whole show was over. The paddock was just a lake of mud and puddles. It ought to have been firm and dry and the candidates for the big race should have been parading for a full hour, thus affording the critics ample time for arriving at opinions as to their merits on looks. I shudder when I think of the wreckage to expensive millinery, dainty shoes and boots, and silk stockings. As for the men, most of them had the appearance of having made attempts to swim the Channel.

The King had arrived from London at Fazakerly Junction, near the course, and with Lord Derby drove in an open landau, in spite of the rain, to the Grand Stand. He watched the race—the little you could see of it—from the roof of Lord Derby's private stand. Wet and yet uncomplaining, the people cheered His Majesty on arrival, the warmth of their welcome being in sharp contrast with the dampness of the conditions. Many must have been deprived of the pleasure of seeing the horses in the paddock. Navigation through and round the puddles was no easy matter, and, moreover, the horses were kept in every possible corner affording shelter. The only one in the parade ring was the favourite Poethlyn. He was heavily sheeted, and, so far as I could judge, I thought he looked finer drawn than I have seen him for some time. Three to one! What a ridiculous price to accept in a Grand National, if you please, and with such appalling conditions underfoot! If we could only have known that he was actually to fall at the very first fence!

I seem to remember that the same fate befell that other great "National" horse, Manifesto, which won twice and was once third under 12st. 13lb. He, on another occasion, fell at that first fence. Three others actually did the same thing last Friday—Gerald L., Ballyboggan and Dunadry. The first two were much fancied and heavily supported by those who were trying to find "something" to beat the favourite. Poethlyn chanced the fence, and, failing to rise at it properly, was well floored. The Aintree fences this year would not permit of any chancing, though I shall tell presently of how Troytown took a chance and it came off. But, then, he is a super-horse. I could find very few of them in the paddock before the race. Ballyboggan was one I saw. He only cost his present owner £70 at Ballyboggan Fair, and then he did well at Punchestown. He was certainly much fancied this time. He has extraordinarily short cannon bones and is inclined to stand over at the knees. Alas, he and Poethlyn were not long away from the paddock.



W. A. Rouch.

THE IRISH WINNER, TROYTOWN, WITH MR. J. R. ANTHONY UP.

Copyright.



Turkey Buzzard and General Saxham I came across. The former is a very fine individual, but he only survived the first round. Clonree did not appeal to me. He has not the physique, at any rate, not yet, of a "National" horse. It was odd that I did not chance across a single horse, with the exception of Turkey Buzzard, that was capable of completing even one round. As a matter of fact, only nine out of twenty-four survived that first round. They were Troytown, Wavertree, Turkey Buzzard, Ardonagh, The Bore, Sergeant Murphy, Picture Saint, Turk II, and Neurotic. Troytown I had seen at Lingfield ten days before. He is a magnificent big fellow, dark brown, with the most wonderful forehead and depth through the heart. He is, too, nothing like he ought to be in a year or two's time when he has furnished to his big frame. At present his long back gives an idea of something lacking about the loins, but there he is! A horse of great power in his action, almost tempestuous in his temperament and keenness to be on with his work, and yet a gentleman in character.

The light was so bad as the result of the falling rain that you could not properly make out what happened at even the first fence and you could not see more in the other direction than two or three fences from the finish. It was not until later that we heard of the fate that befell Poethlyn and the others so early in the race. As they came into view for the first time it was seen that Troytown was leading slightly from Ardonagh. The former had always been in front, and there he was charging on like a lion with his head set rather low. He stumbled a bit on landing over the water, but it made no matter, and he went gaily on in the van into the country for the second and last time. Then another pause, during which we knew much was happening. It was in that interval that Ardonagh slipped on landing over a fence. Mr. Whitaker, who rode him, says that he was leading Troytown at the time. Wavertree, Turkey Buzzard and Picture Saint came to grief, and Neurotic fell five fences from the finish, but was remounted and completed the course.

Then, at last, came four figures out of the mist, two of them being fairly close together in front. As they came at the last fence I made them out to be Troytown and The Bore. The former was first over and he came charging on in amazingly

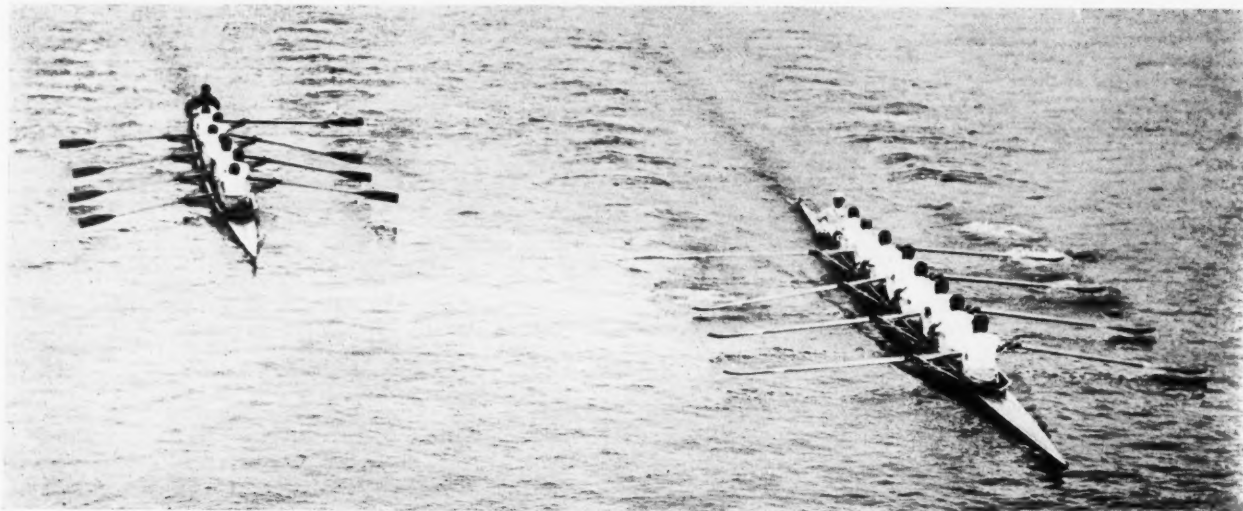
strong style; indeed, I have never seen a Grand National winner finish so strongly. The Bore was tiring, and between the last fence and home he was passed for second place by The Turk II, which also ran a stout-hearted horse. Sergeant Murphy staggered in fourth, and after a long interval came the remounted Neurotic. Then there were wonderful scenes in the enclosures, but especially in the paddock. The Irishmen went crazy with joy, cheering their idol and swarming round him so that it was with the utmost difficulty horse and rider could make their way to the unsaddling enclosure. It was a grand and thrilling moment for Mr. Jack Anthony, who had ridden his third winner of the Grand National.

Assuredly he is a great fellow in a steeplechase and especially a long-distance one. After the race he told us that he was far more tired at the finish than his horse was. "He's a wonderful horse," said his rider, "and from the time I first rode him I always said he would win. He led from end to end and was going great guns at the finish." Then he went on to tell us that he made only one blunder, which was when he slipped in taking off at the fifth fence from the finish and properly, or improperly, breasted it; but the big fellow made a clever recovery and went on as strongly as ever.

It is, of course, a very great pity that Poethlyn did not stand up to try conclusions with him and settle the question as to which is the better. He was trying to give the Irishman 12lb., and, purely as a personal opinion, based on the way Troytown accomplished his big task, I should say that he would not have succeeded. My doubt about the winner was as to whether he would stay the course. Well, one need doubt no longer after what we saw; and so we have him as a very fine example of a Grand National winner, and one, moreover, that should win the race again, given health and fitness, for he is only a seven year old now. I stated in a recent issue that he is by the Cyllene horse Zria, which has taken the leading place as the sire of jumpers. Before concluding these impressions I should like to pay a tribute to the training ability and fine horsemanship of Mr. Harry Brown, who, to his great delight, rode The Bore into third place. Mr. Brown is as keen as he is capable, and he has never ridden in better form than during the last six months.

PHILIPPOS

## THE BOAT RACE ONCE MORE



APPROACHING HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE, CAMBRIDGE LEADING BY THREE-QUARTERS OF A LENGTH.



PASSING THE WINNING POST, CAMBRIDGE FOUR LENGTHS AHEAD.

## OXFORD WINS THE SPORTS



A HISTORIC QUARTER.  
Dead heat between Rudd of Oxford and Butler of Cambridge.



THE FINISH OF THE HUNDRED.  
Abrahams of Cambridge beats Rudd on the tape.



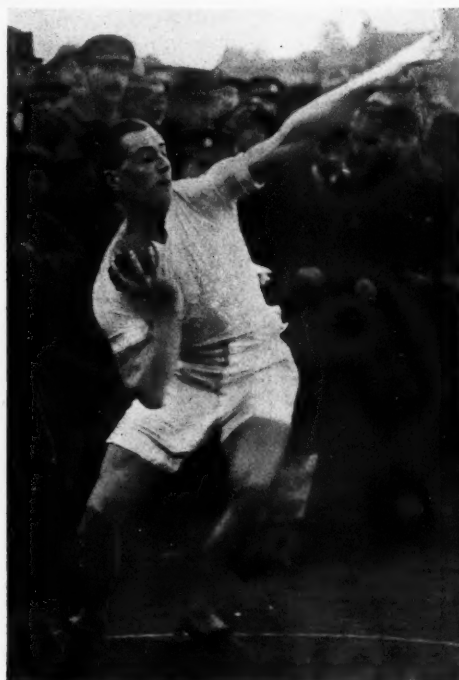
STALLARD OF CAMBRIDGE WINNING THE  
MILE AT HIS EASE.



RUDD WINS THE HALF AND THE SPORTS  
FOR OXFORD.



MONTAGUE OF OXFORD, WINNER OF  
THE THREE MILES.



WOODS OF CAMBRIDGE. AN ARTISTIC  
WEIGHT PUTTER.



WHITE HIGH JUMPING. ANOTHER OF  
OXFORD'S AMERICAN ALLIES.



FEATHER, AN AMERICAN RHODES  
SCHOLAR TAKES THE HAMMER.



# THE BLACK-HEADED GULL

BY ROBERT GURNEY.

THERE are few more beautiful sights for a lover of birds than a breeding colony of black-headed gulls, and it is fortunate that such settlements are not only numerous, but are apparently increasing, thanks to the protection generally afforded to them. In 1884 Mr. J. E. Harting made a summary of the gulleries then existing, and concluded that the bird was doomed to extinction. His prophecy is, however, far from being fulfilled, and it is rather becoming a question whether a limit should not be placed upon the bird's increase. Some investigations have been carried out upon the contents of the stomachs of these gulls with a view to ascertaining whether they do any serious injury to man's interests, since they have been accused of destroying the fry of salmon and trout and also of eating seed corn. It is true that individuals have been found containing corn and salmon fry, but it is abundantly proved that the great bulk of their food consists of insects and earthworms. Whether some of the insects eaten may be beneficial to man, and their consumption injurious, seems to be hardly worth considering in the present state of our knowledge and the nature of the material upon which the identification of the insects rests, and, though earthworms are certainly most valuable agricultural workers, it is not suggested that they should be specially protected. We have positive evidence of very valuable work done by the gulls in destroying crane flies, the larvæ of which do much injury to pastures, and we can cordially pardon them for taking a few useful insects among the multitudes of harmful species devoured. The gulls that follow the plough in winter are no doubt doing useful work, and, though they have been accused and convicted of taking a certain amount of seed corn, the evidence showed that it was only taken when sown broadcast and not drilled in and covered with soil. There can be no doubt that, just as human tastes vary, so there will be individual gulls with a taste for fish, but they are few, and the harm they may do is greatly outweighed by the benefits

conferred. But, although there seems to be no economic reason why these gulls should not increase unchecked, still, as is often the case in nature, the multiplication of one species is apt to prove the undoing of others. Mr. Millais has given an account ("Surface-feeding Ducks," page 84) of the destruction of young teal by black-headed gulls at Murthly, but in this case he is careful to show that the destruction was due to individual gulls only, and that it ceased when these particular individuals were shot. Still, in other places, as at Bala and Loch Stormont, the increase of the gulls has led to a marked decrease of ducks, so that, beautiful and useful as the gulls may be, watch should be kept in places where they are specially numerous that the protection afforded to them should be tempered by a consideration also for other birds.

If a map of the breeding haunts of this gull in England be examined (see "Transactions Norfolk and Norwich Nat. Soc.," Vol. X, 1919, page 446) it will be seen that they cluster thickly along the border of England and Scotland and down the chain of the Pennines, though there is a group of gulleries in Wales, and a few are found along the East Coast and in the south in Kent and Dorsetshire. It is a bird primarily of the wild moorland tarns, and a tour of the gulleries of England would take the visitor through some of the finest scenery of the kingdom. The nests are as a rule built on an island, or on tussocks surrounded by water, and rarely on the shores of a pool or lake where they are accessible to man. Thompson in his "Natural History of Ireland," 1851, mentions a colony on Portlough, near Dunfanaghy, which is said to have left the place when a boat was placed on the lake and returned when the boat foundered. On the other hand, the nests are often built on tidal saltings, where they are not only easily accessible, but are also subject to destruction by high tides. During 1919 the nests at Wells in Norfolk were destroyed twice in this way. I visited the colony immediately after one of these high tides, and it



SCOULTON MERE: SETTLING DOWN.





DISTURBED AGAIN.

was curious to note the indifference of the gulls to my presence among the washed-out nests as compared with their usual clamour.

Some of the larger colonies have existed continuously for generations, but no certain references can be traced earlier than the seventeenth century. The gullery at Scoulton was a notable one in Sir Thomas Browne's day, and those of Delamere Forest, of Ravenglass and of Pallinsburn are of very ancient foundation. On the other hand, mention is made by early writers of vast gulleries which have long ceased to exist. For instance, those of Norbury, described by Ray in 1662 and by Plot in 1686, and of Horsey Mere.

But, for the most part, the numbers and size of gulleries show great changes from time to time, since drainage or persecution lead to the desertion of one site and the adoption of another perhaps close at hand. The great gullery of Twigmoor in Lincolnshire, for instance, was founded by desertion of the site at Manton close by, and there is a tradition that Morebattle, near Kelso, was once the station of the colony

which now breeds at Pallinsburn. From the large permanent gulleries new offshoots are often founded, which may be temporary and small or may grow at the expense of the parent gullery, and new colonies are started either by single pairs, as at Bala, or by movements of large numbers of gulls together, as at Alderfen in Norfolk.

At the present time there are about eighty gulleries in England and Wales, of which by far the larger number (49) are situated in the northern counties of Northumberland (16), Cumberland (11), Yorkshire (12), Westmorland (3) and Lancashire (7). These figures include colonies both large and small, and it is difficult to obtain any reliable figures as to the numbers of birds breeding, especially when they are numerous. The largest colonies appear to be those of Twigmoor, where the numbers have been estimated at about five thousand pairs, and of Pallinsburn, Ravenglass, Moorthwaite and Scoulton, at each of which about twelve hundred pairs nest. In Dorset about a thousand pairs nest around various pools south of Poole Harbour.

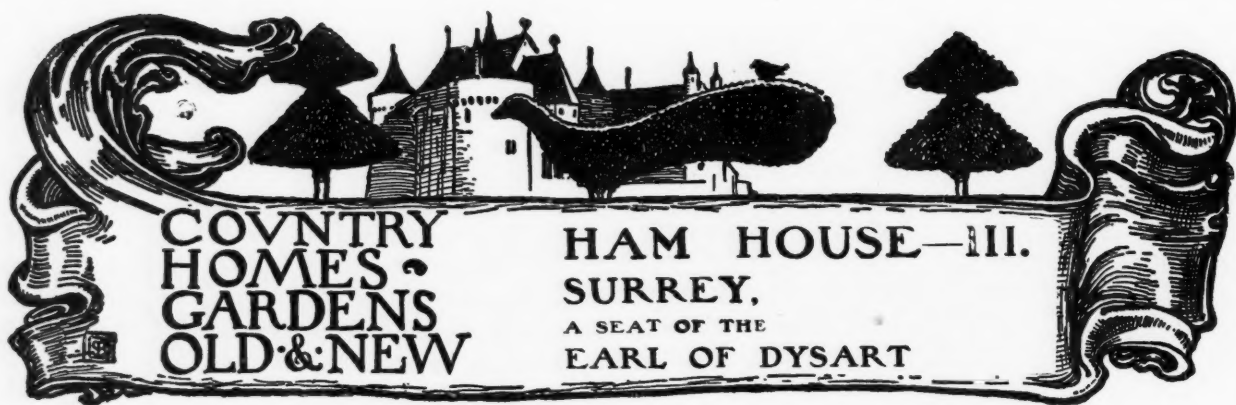
## LIFE, DEATH AND THE CHILD

A wild flower beckons to the moon,  
Asking a boon, asking a boon,

A river runs into the sea  
Too soon, too soon,

A child to-morrow in his glee,  
Will pluck the flower  
And paddle in the sea.

ANNE F. BROWN.



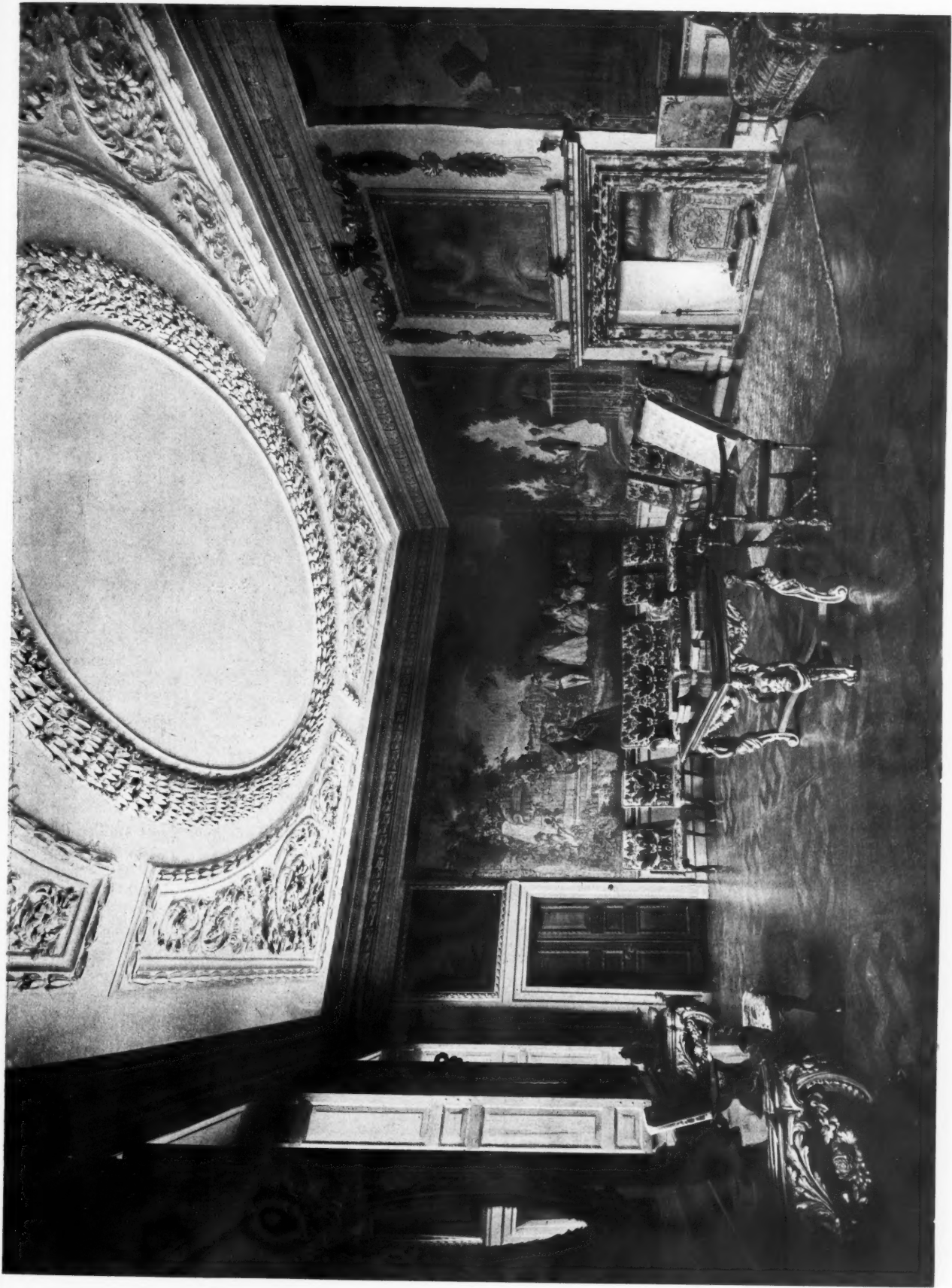
THE central room on the first floor of the south front at Ham (Fig. 1), now known as the "Cabal Room," is called in the 1679 inventory "Ye Queene's Bedchamber," but whether Catharine of Braganza ever occupied it is uncertain. The ceiling is of the same type as the others in the new-building, but, the room being larger and more important, it is more elaborate, the plasterwork of the spandrel panels being very well and fancifully modelled (Fig. 3). The scrollwork scheme of stem, leaf and flower is a self-sufficient design. But to it are added most lively incidents. Here a wild boar emerging from a big flower is threatened on the one

side by hounds and a horn-blowing huntsman, and on the other by a spear-armed horseman. Out from a still bigger flower a centaur dashes, without looking ahead of him, to where a satyr is preparing to deal him a deadly blow with a club. The room is painted white, but the chief wall spaces, running from each side of the fireplace to the doorways, are hung with tapestry, described by Mrs. Roundell in her "Ham House, its History and its Treasures," as being Mortlake and there in 1679. She adds:

The subjects of this beautiful tapestry are exclusively rural, and the colours are perfectly preserved, with the exception of those portions which were worked in gold and silver thread and which



1.—THE QUEEN'S BEDCHAMBER, NOW CALLED THE CABAL ROOM.

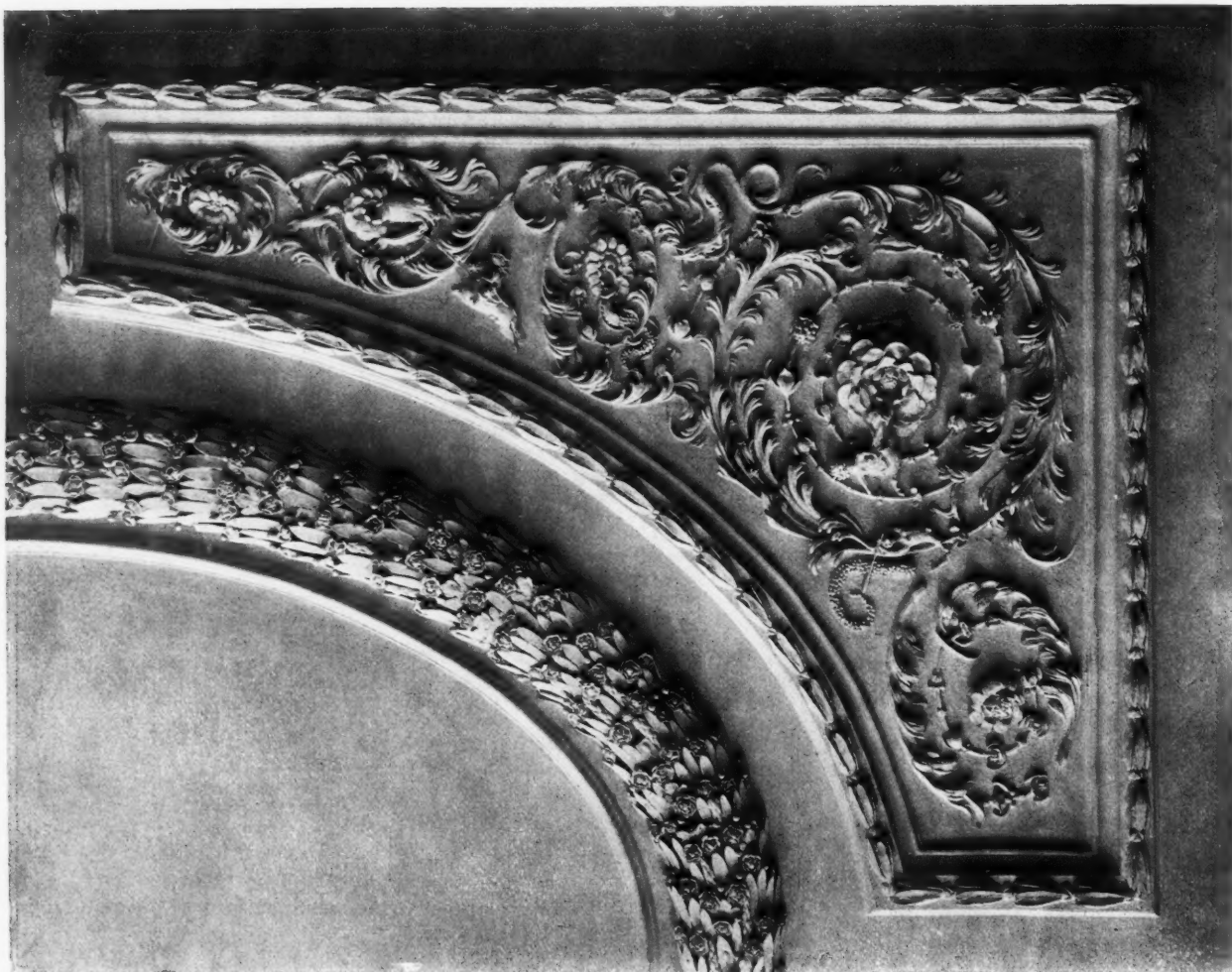


"COUNTRY LIFE."

2.—THE QUEEN'S BEDCHAMBER, LOOKING WEST.

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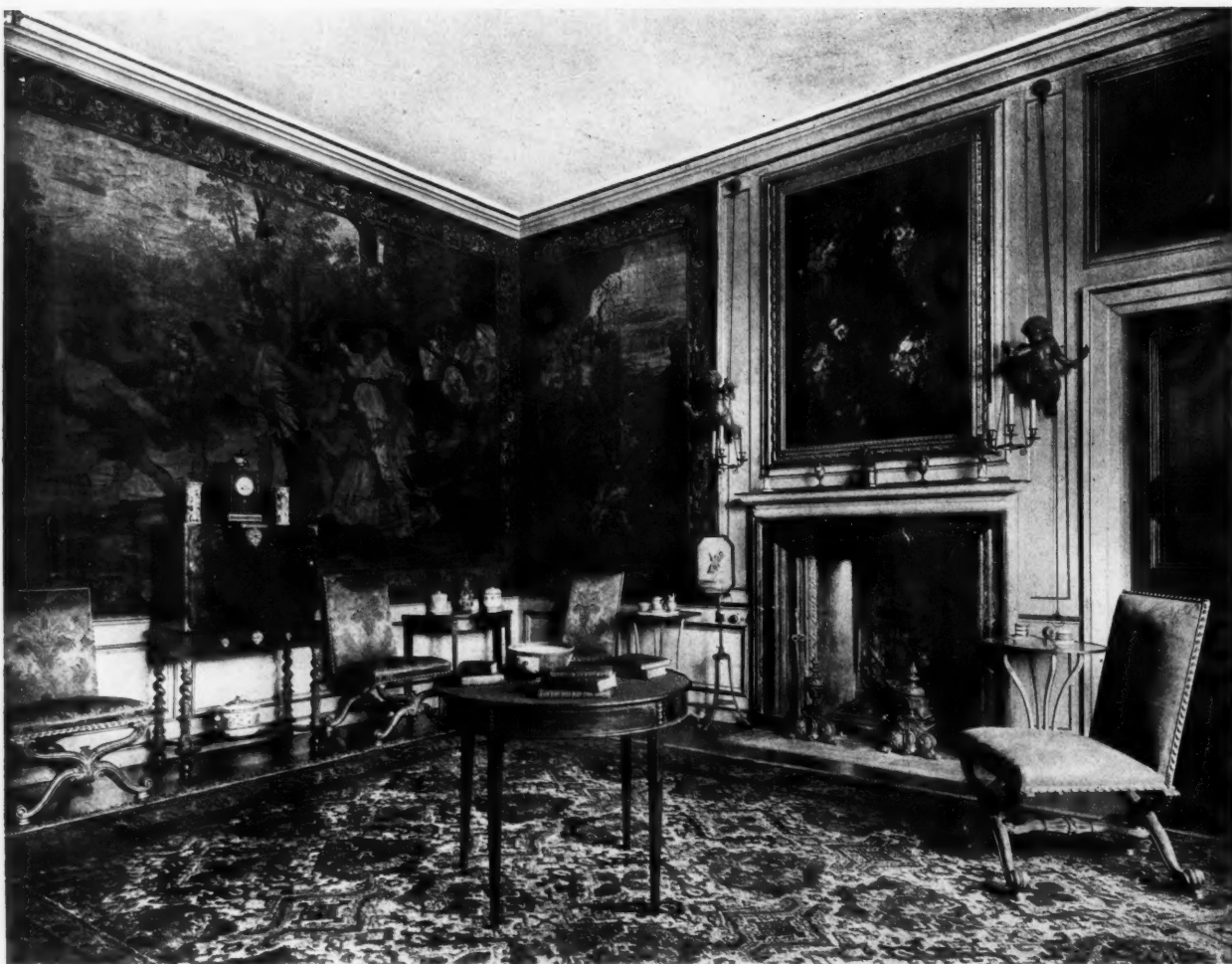




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3.—A CEILING SPANDREL IN THE QUEEN'S BEDCHAMBER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

4.—GREEN DRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

In 1679 this was called the withdrawing-room, and the Green Drawing-room is what is now called the Blue Drawing-room.

have become tarnished. In this set of tapestry full-length figures are represented, all taking part in outdoor scenes. Some are dancing on a lawn, some are swinging, some are gathering fruit. A rich soft black is introduced in some of the dresses with excellent effect, whilst the foliage of the trees and the tall single hollyhocks in the garden are beautifully represented.

Mr. D. S. Maccoll, however, in the *Burlington Magazine* of October, 1918, drew attention "to the signature BRADSHAW, which can be read in the lower right-hand corner of the first subject." Now, Bradshaw, who was also responsible for a fine set of furniture coverings at Belton, did not flourish till the eighteenth century opened, and Mr. Maccoll, from the nature of the designs, "a queer *pot pourri* of motives from pictures of Watteau and his followers," does not place the tapestries till 1720 or later. They are therefore likely to have been an acquisition of the fourth Earl of Dysart, their perfect fit implying that they were made to his order for their present position. They are masterly in design and colouring, and Mr. Maccoll's description and illustration of them are worth study.

Numerous as are the sets of tapestry mentioned in the inventory, they do not answer to any now in the house, nor do they tally with the description of four sets, as to which a separate record (undated) is preserved, headed: "Measurements of each piece of each set of Tapestry," and describing them as:

1. A fine suit of 11 foot deepe Antwerpe, 8 pieces, Titus & Vespasian.
2. A fine suit of 11 foot deepe Landskep Bruxills, 8 pieces.
3. A fine suit of 11 foot deepe Bruxills, 8 pieces, Story of Poliphemus & Ulysses.
4. A fine suit of 11 foot deepe, Bruxills, 8 pieces, Story of Gideon.

An item in an account of furnishings "bought of Richard Hawksley and John Dutton, 6th May, 1668" (but whether by the Earl of Lauderdale or the Countess of Dysart, as they then were, does not appear) runs as follows:

A fine set of 11 foot deepe Brussels hangings, land-skips, 8 pieces, 163l. 2s. 6d.

which reads as if it referred to the purchase of the second set in the above list. None of these, any more than the Great Dining-room Mortlakes or the Stories of Vulcan and of Polidore in the Yellow Satin and State Chambers, is now to be found on the walls of Ham. Between the windows of the Queen's Chamber there are enriched panels, the top one having the ducal coronet in the swags in the same manner as the larger scheme over the fireplace, framing a Virgin



Copyright.

## 5.—THE CEILING OF THE QUEEN'S CLOSET.

"C.L."

The fine plasterwork design supplemented with the painting of Gannymede in the oval.



Copyright.

## 6.—THE QUEEN'S CLOSET, OR ALCOVE ROOM.

"C.L."

Note the fine inlay of the floor.



with Child by Andrea del Sarto, merely called "A Madonna" in the inventory, which tells us that, no doubt in view of the visit of the Portuguese Queen, there was placed here a "Portingale Bedstead Garnish'd wth Brasse upon foure guilt Feet." It possessed two sets of hangings, of which the grand one was of cloth of gold with raised flowers of blue velvet. Through the Bedchamber the Queen was to reach her "Closett" (Fig. 6), a narrow, single windowed room, none the less richly got up because of its size. The alcove at the back is only 3½ ft. in depth and cannot, as Mrs. Roundell suggests, have accommodated the Queen's bed. The idea that the room was meant for private audiences is more reasonable, and "Y<sup>e</sup> Chayre of State & foot Stoole," of which there is mention in the accounts, may have been intended for

and the Picture Closets upstairs and two downstairs chambers, do we find the finished article.

Downstairs, the central position under the "Cabal Room" was occupied by the family dining-room, and such it continues to be. The gilt leather remains on the walls, in association with much enriched oak wainscoting, door frames and chimney-piece, where, flanked by drops and elaborately framed, is the picture of Rose, the Royal gardener, on bended knee, presenting to Charles II the first pineapple grown in Britain. (Fig. 7). West of the dining-room lay the apartments of the Duke and Duchess, seven in number, of which she occupied five, among which was a bathing-room containing "One Bathing Tubb, and a little Stoole within it." But the presence beside it of a bedstead hung with painted satin does not suggest much soapuds and splashing. East of the dining-room lay the ground floor withdrawing-room (under the yellow satin chamber), hung with crimson damask, but this was afterwards replaced by another set of three very fine tapestries (Fig. 4).

Through the withdrawing-room were a bedchamber and closet occupying the south-east addition and with the same disposition upstairs, corresponding to the library at the other end. The bedchamber was hung with yellow damask, of which also were made the curtains of a bed topped with great plumes—so expensive an adjunct at that date that those on William III's bed at Hampton Court cost £105. Altogether this small chamber at Ham was a sumptuous affair, for the ceiling is the most elaborately painted in the house, while the panel scheme of the corner chimney-piece is charming, and all the better for its reserve. The vista through the open door (Fig. 8) is of the whole ground floor suite.

If the rooms at Ham are numerous, they are small for a great house. The greatest are still those of the Vavasor period, the largest of the new ones being somewhat less than 30 ft. long. It was, therefore, not so much size as sumptuousness which struck the Lauderdale's visitors, who, like Evelyn after seeing it in the summer of 1678, pronounced it:

Inferior to few of the best Villas in Italy itself; the House furnish'd like a great Prince's; the Parterres, Flower Gardens, Orangeries, Groves, Avenues, Courts, Statues, Perspectives, Fountains, Aviaries, and all this at the Banks of the sweetest River in the World.

Time and taste have swept away some of these features, but have

added others, and the terraces, flower gardens, lawns and groves, together with the enclosing walls, the iron palisadoes, the great gate piers and gates (Figs. 9, 10 and 11), not only make up a pleasure of exceptional charm, but are, like the house itself, a vivid reminder of how country places were planned, perfected and lived in under the first restored Stuart. All this, and the importance of Lauderdale as a historical personage, have given continuity to the impression of greatness and consequence, so that Macaulay exclaims against the "more than Italian luxury of Ham," whose lord he brands as "the most dishonest man in the whole Cabal." When and why the tradition arose that the five members of that Ministry met in the Queen's chamber and earned it the title of the "Cabal Room" does not appear. Lauderdale's connection with Ham began when he married its owner in 1672. It was after that, as all agree, that the building



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7.—THE DINING-ROOM CHIMNEYPIECE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

here. Besides "fixed pictures," the walls have carved wood enrichments in the rather heavy manner of the Picture closet; but the projecting fireplace is charming, the fire arch and hearth being in the Italian Scagliola manner—coloured scrolls on a black ground with the ducally crowned cypher J. E. L. for Duke John and Duchess Elizabeth. This is repeated on the elaborately inlaid floor, perfect here, while of the similar floor in the bedchamber only a small portion remains. The ceiling (Fig. 5) is a small edition of the others in this suite, but has been completed, for here the painter has done his job; the plain surfaces imitate white veined marble, the enrichment is gilt, and, in the central oval, the eagle bears Gannymede to Heaven. Such treatment, on more ambitious lines, was certainly intended for the larger ceilings, but the moment and the means were not found. Only in small rooms, such as the Queen's





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8.—THE VOLERY ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Where, in widowhood, the Duchess of Lauderdale kept rare birds.



Copyright.

9.—THE SOUTH GATES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The south front of the house is seen through them.



Copyright.

10.—PIER OF THE GATES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The great height and robust proportions of these piers give great dignity to this wide opening.

of which the Queen's chamber forms part was begun, and the accounts make it clear that the work was not complete anyhow till 1675. But the "Cabal" Ministry, formed in 1667 fell, through popular and parliamentary clamour, in 1674, so that, if ever they met in the Queen's chamber, it can have been for a very short while, and the joiners and plasterers must have shared their counsels! Yet, not only does Mrs. Roundell speak of "the eight eventful years during which the members of the King's Cabal met within its walls," but says of the room that "it remains unchanged; everything is now as it was." Yet we have seen that the tapestries are Georgian, and only a single chair and table in the room are of Charles II's time. The between window mirrors and side tables are Georgian, and the chairs and settees are of mahogany upholstered in Genoa-cut velvet of a pattern prevalent in Queen Anne's day, and the stretchless cabriolet legs are also typical of her reign and cannot date earlier.

By that time the Lauderdale had passed away. The Duke had had "a Fit of an Apoplexie" at Ham in 1680, from which he never fully recovered, and he died two years later at Tunbridge Wells. Thence, after eight months, "that Noble and Extraordinaire Person was placed in his Tomb next to his Father's Bodie" at Haddington in Scotland, there being present "two Thousand Horse at least." As he had left all the property he could away from his brother and successor in the Lauderdale earldom to his widow, there arose a family feud. She never allowed the new earl to visit her and even turned his portrait out of the gallery at Ham. There she made no further changes except in the furnishings. To her other five apartments she added those of the Duke, whose study became her "Reposing Closett." She went in for the prevailing fashion of collecting "outlandish birds," and besides the aviaries mentioned by Evelyn





Copyright.

11.—THE EAST GATES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

in 1678, turned the south-east ground floor chamber into the "Volery," a name, though not a purpose, it has retained. She outlived Lauderdale sixteen years, dying at Ham House and being "Interr'd y<sup>e</sup> 16 Day of June 1698" in Petersham Church.

Lionel Tollemache, her eldest son by her first husband, then succeeded as third Earl of Dysart and owner of Ham, where

his descendant, the tenth Earl, now dwells. The intervening family history has many incidents relating to and affecting Ham, but space forbids their relation. It is in its predominant aspect of a Charles II home that Ham looms large in our architectural annals. The picture that has been given of it here would only be obscured by a narration of its subsequent history.

H. AVRAY TIPPING.

## CHIMNEY FURNITURE AT HAM HOUSE

WE have seen how impressed John Evelyn was with the furnishings of Ham House when he visited it in 1678. Soon after either he himself or his daughter Mary, who died in 1685, struck by the feminine luxury of the time, wrote "*Mundus Muliebris*, or The Ladies Dressing Room

Unlock'd and her Toilet Spread," and therein specially notes among other expensive novelties

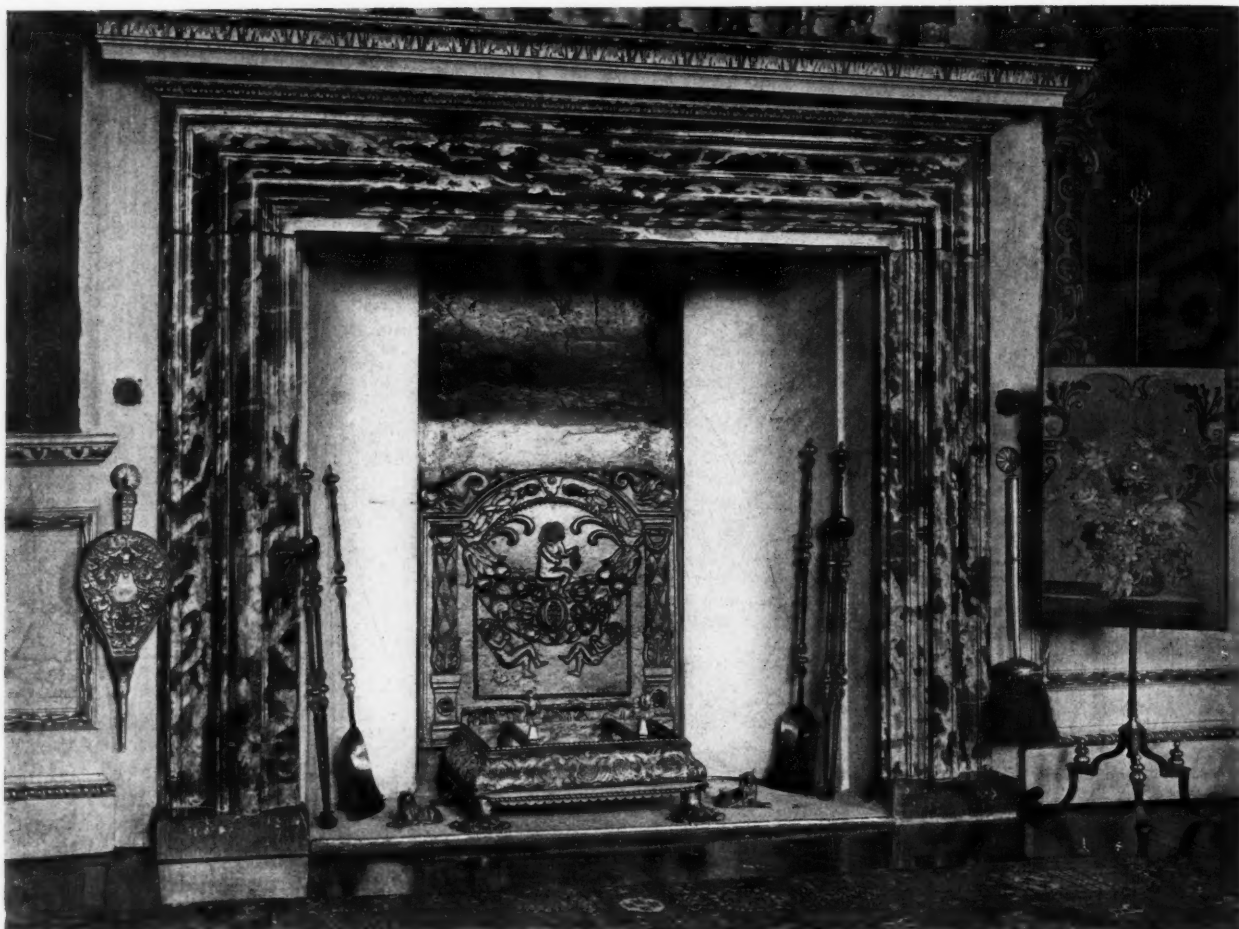
The chimney furniture of plate  
(For iron's now quite out of date).

Was the Duchess of Lauderdale's suite of rooms in his mind?



1.—FIREPAN OVERLAID WITH SILVER SCROLLWORK.





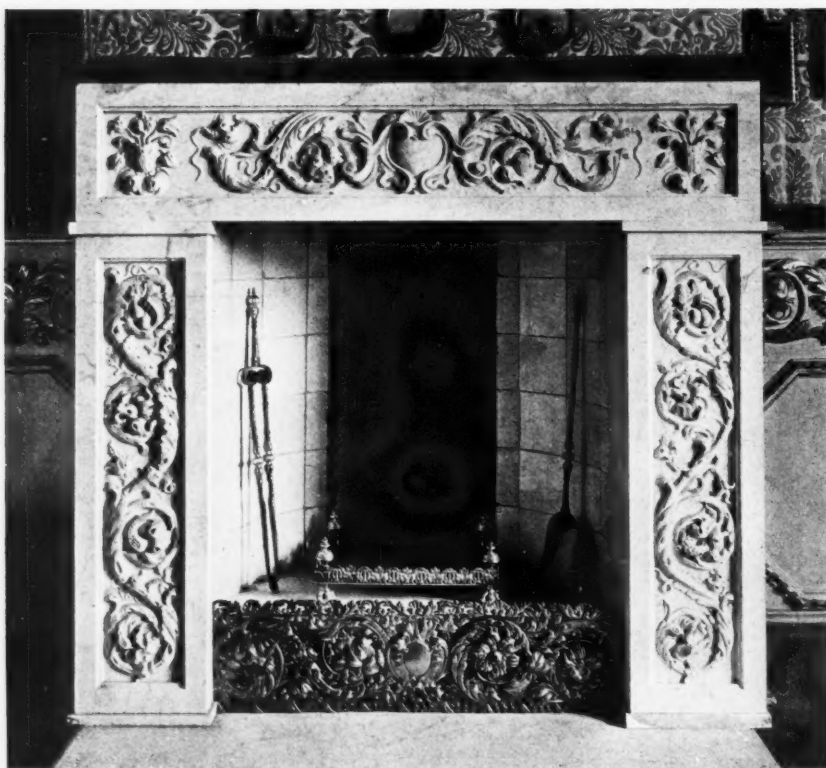
2.—THE CHIMNEYPiece AND IMPLEMENTS IN THE QUEEN'S BEDCHAMBER.

Very likely; for nothing emphasises the finished manner in which Ham House was furnished by her more than the fire utensils, and some of the rooms still retain those enumerated in the 1679 inventory, which we know from Mrs. Roundell's paraphrase and quotations. Thus she tells us that:

The handles of the fire-irons in the Duchess of Lauderdale's bedroom were made of silver and the fire-irons were suspended from silver hooks fixed in either side of the fireplace. The pole of the fire screen (or as the old inventory calls it the

"screen-stick") was "garnished with silver," and there was a small silver fender.

Similar articles frequently recurred in the inventory besides "fire pans," which were half way between the old chafing dish and brazier, and the still quite unusual fixed grate. There were several pairs of silver garnished bellows, but only in the Duke's room is a hearth brush mentioned. What we rather miss are the great fire-dogs or andirons, the habitual denizens of the hearth which, from being of cast or wrought iron, were now, in great houses, also covered with embossed silver. Such there were, and are, at Hampton Court, and such in variety were made for that lover of silver furniture, Charles, sixth Earl of Dorset, and, together with his silver tables and vases, are still at Knole. At Ham there are some diminutive silver dogs in the shape of lions or boys belonging to the fire pans so that these might be used for small wood fires as well as for charcoal. But of the great decorative andirons two or three feet high, standing forward and protected from the too great heat of the live log by a small iron pair, called creepers, behind them, Ham has now no example, except those used to support a basket grate in the north drawing-room. These have figures standing on large elaborate bases, while in the downstairs drawing-room (page 442) are a smaller pair, without figures. Dating from the time of the Lauderdale marriage, there is an order to Kirkwood, the steward or agent, to "Pay Mr. Bowers in full for one paire of silver Andirons the sum of 16l." This order, written in the Duchess's own hand, together with Bowers' receipt, have recently been found by Miss Hack, whose researches among the Ham House muniments have shed much additional light on the history of the house. She has also found two other bills of the year 1673 for silver articles, including



[ 3.—THE CHIMNEYPiece AND IMPLEMENTS OF THE MINIATURE ROOM.



4.—SCREEN STICK OF IRON WITH SILVER KNOBS.



5.—BELLOWS AND BRUSH WITH SILVER EMBOSSED WORK.

tongs and shovels and the hooks on which they hung. Thus we see that, wherever practical, the new mode of "chimney furniture of plate" was adopted at Ham, the exception being the fire back, where iron alone was capable of resisting the heat. It had been, indeed, to protect the stone or brick of which the chimney was built that cast-iron plates, with or without decoration, had been introduced in the fifteenth century and largely made at the Sussex forges. They continued, altering merely in form and decoration, so long as the open fireplace lasted. Some at Ham have the Royal Arms, others being enriched with boys playing about fruit and flower swags in the fashion of the day. Earlier in use than the fire back was the andiron. We can still see in the Penshurst hall the form used when the fire burnt on a central hearth and the smoke rose up to escape through a roof louvre. There the uprights are connected by a cross-bar against which the burning logs were piled, the uprights preventing their falling off sideways. But in a chimney opening the uprights are separate, each having a bar behind it across which lay the logs. Such are frequently mentioned in late mediæval inventories. Thus, after Sir John Fastolf's death in 1459 there were found to be at his castle of Caister, besides several in store, "ij staundyng aundeirys" in the "utmost Chambur" and in his own chamber the same. Moreover, his chimney, and his alone, was supplied with "j payre of tongys" and "j payre of bellewes." Evidently such implements were then rare, as Caister Castle was the *dernier mot* in construction and in furnishing as known to Englishmen under Henry VI. Thus the advance made in quantity as well as quality by the time of Charles II is brought

home to us by comparing the Caister and Ham inventories. Though much that was present in 1679 is now absent, yet enough remains at this house, and at this house alone, to enable us to see in all completeness what the rich man's fireplace and its adjuncts were like at the close of the seventeenth century.

That in the Queen's Bedchamber, or "Cabal Room," as it came to be called, has representative examples of all the articles mentioned in the inventory, some that apparently were not there in 1679 being now included in this set, as we find here a hearth brush that corresponds to the only one mentioned in the inventory. It was then, as already stated, in the Duke's apartment, as to which Mrs. Roundell tells us:

On the hearth was a silver Hearth-rod or bar of silver let into the hearthstone in the place occupied by a modern fender. There was a "fire-pan" or iron tray for holding small pieces of burning wood, and the fire-pan had silver handles and was raised on silver feet. The fire-irons hung on silver hooks and the Duke had a Hearth-brush "tipped with silver."

The hearth brush now in the Queen's Bedchamber (Fig. 5) is more than "tipped with silver," unless we take tipped to mean topped or covered with that material, as no wood or iron framework anywhere shows. The handle is a plain silver tube, diminishing as it descends, and banded with silver wire twisted ropewise. This is also used for the ring and as an edge to the richly embossed casing of the block that holds the bristles. The bellows, which have the Duchess's cypher ("E. D. L.," for Elizabeth Dysart and Lauderdale), are similarly treated, but, of course, offer a larger field for the display of embossed



silver. In front of the fire back stands a fire pan with the same cypher and much the same foliage scrolls as the bellows, so that they appear to be part of the same set, and to have originally belonged to one of the Duchess's own large suite of rooms. The little andirons within the pan look like ballet dancers, but are boys emerging from an acanthus leaf rosette. The lions by the side will have been the finials of the andirons of another pair, of which certainly one surviving example lacks its silver garnishing. The illustration of the Queen's Chamber fireplace, with its typical marble bolection moulded fire arch (Fig. 2), shows all the furniture in place. Bellows and brush hang from the "chimney hooks," of which four are included in the 1673 bill. To the right stands the "screen stick" of wrought iron tipped and mounted with silver and carrying a panel of tapestry or petit point. Within the fireplace are two pairs of shovel and tongs (pokers only came in with the use of coal) of the same design, fluted knobs and crinkled leaves of silver triply enriching each iron stem. A similar set also occurs in the Miniature Room fireplace (Fig. 3), where the fire pan is merely an iron sheet raised on silver lion's paws, edged with silver lacework and cornered with silver vases. This example certainly looks as if designed for the use of charcoal only. The raised hearth has no silver "bar," but a metal fender very richly embossed with cartouche and scrolls cognate to those on the associated marble and to the dado enrichments of this highly finished little room or closet, of which two illustrations were given last week. Then also was shown the "Greene Drawing Room" (now the Blue Room) chimneypiece where, as Mrs. Roundell tells us, "the fire-irons and bellows all garnished with silver hang from silver hooks," and there is a fire pan, such as we also see in the Queen's Closet (page 443) and the Volery Room (page 445). Two more pairs of tongs and shovel are also illustrated (Fig. 6) as examples of the very varied and choice design of this well considered detail of the Ham furnishings.



6.—TWO SETS OF FIRE-IRONS WITH SILVER ENRICHMENTS.

## THE DEATH OF MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

TO most people the death of Mrs. Humphry Ward came with a sudden surprise, but her health had been failing for some time past, and the crisis was probably precipitated by the serious illness of her husband. Just after she has passed away is not a very appropriate time for attempting to estimate the position which she will hold permanently in English literature. One is more inclined at the moment to think of her many virtues as a patriotic citizen and a woman devoted to good works. She put into practice some excellent ideas, such as that of opening the playgrounds for London children on holidays and after school hours. During the War she was a very active worker for the soldiers, and more than once visited the battlefields and wrote with sense and perception of what she had seen. This is in all probability what her novels will be prized for in the future. Mrs. Humphry Ward certainly had the faculty of telling a story well. Her style was solid and good without being comparable with that of those who really excelled in the art of writing—Jane Austen of her own sex and Henry Fielding of the other. She lacked the humour that lightens up the pages of all the greatest fiction, the work of Cervantes and Fielding and Scott and Thackeray.

But she is entitled to be judged by her own aims and ideals. If we take the first and, perhaps, the best of her books, "Robert Elsmere," it won its way not by the force and play of passion,

not by an original view of human nature or a delight in presenting its eccentricities and oddities, but because it represented a struggle taking place in many minds at the time. Old religious conceptions were being violently assailed, and some of them crumbled to dust in the process. Agnosticism was the attitude of the intellectuals. Mrs. Humphry Ward, like Beaconsfield on a celebrated occasion, declared herself on the side of the angels. Her book was in reality a very large tract, but a tract about what people were actually thinking and reading and discussing. So it was talked about and argued about and written about till it attained a circulation as large as that usually recorded to much more sensational material. It was remarkable that such a book should come out of the Arnold family. At the very time of its appearance Matthew Arnold, who was her uncle, was touching upon the same theme with a cleverness and irony which overlaid, but did not conceal, the seriousness behind. We cannot imagine his father, Dr. Arnold, liking the book. It is indeed curious that, despite his seriousness and gravity, "Matthew Bramble" should have been his favourite in fiction. He boasted once of having read it at least fifty times.

Mrs. Humphry Ward wrote a great many novels, and not all of them hinged upon the religious problems of the day. She tried, in fact, to do for politics what she had done for religion. The success she achieved was that of an intellect that could



do nothing badly, and yet was here confronted with a set of ideas not wholly mastered. There is a certain crudity in her political novels as compared with those that have a religious bent. Mrs. Humphry Ward must be classed, then, with those writers who are not born story-tellers, but who have used the novel form in order to discuss agreeably and freely the problems of the hour. We see conspicuous examples of this in Arnold Bennett and H. G. Wells, whose works are read not so much on account of their imaginativeness or their presentment of life, as for their discussion of the problems past, present and future which attend upon social development. Somebody once said that Mrs. Humphry Ward dramatised thought, and in a rough way that puts in a nutshell the working theory of many who are simply classified as novelists by those who do not dissect and analyse works of fiction. Whether they will have a permanent value remains to be seen. They must possess for ever historical interest, because, after all, the human race has been going through

a novel experience and a great adventure. Humanity seems to have dozed on without undergoing any remarkable alteration of thought for a hundred years at least. Then early in the nineteenth century the sluices were opened and new ideas poured along the channels of the human race. This synchronised with the adoption of habits that had to be moulded in order to adapt them to the lessons which science, opening up new ground in so many directions, was chiefly yielding. The eighteenth century compared with the nineteenth century was a *Sleepy Hollow*. Its successor was almost too turbulent, but the great assimilation of the new ideas is in large measure due to the band of interpreters. Of old great men thought and their generation knew nothing of it. To-day a new idea is flung over the civilised world by a thousand different agencies, and of this fact Mrs. Humphry Ward took advantage. Her writings may conceivably pass out of fashion, but they will always be held in respect.

## THE ATHERSTONE

"NIMROD" thought that "the Atherstone country in Lord Anson's time was, barring the Duke of Rutland's and the Quorn, the best country I ever rode over. It all holds a good scent, is easy and gentlemanlike to get across, and the Leicestershire part of it is very fine indeed." This is quite true as far as it goes, but it is clear to me that "Nimrod" only knew part of the country. Some part of the Atherstone territory is beautiful from the rider's point of view. There are other parts where fences are blind, enclosures small, and the coverts so strong and rough that I recollect being advised to put boots on my horses in certain woods. Yet for those of us who did not try to skim the cream off the country, but took the four days as they came, it always struck me as being a very interesting country to hunt in. If parts were rough, the foxes were generally stout and wild, and, as "Nimrod" says, it is a consistently good scenting country. In the days when Mr. Oakeley (the father of the present Master) ruled the Hunt I spent some time in the Atherstone country. I was young then, but Mr. Oakeley was, to my mind, the very model of what a Master should be, and his judgment about foxhounds has seldom been surpassed. He was, too, a great judge of horses, and I can still recollect my admiration and envy of one or two of the hunters provided for Castleman. Before Mr. Oakeley came Colonel (then Mr.) Anstruther Thomson was perhaps only less well suited by the Atherstone than he was by the Bicester country which he took afterwards. But it was Mr. Oakeley who made the pack, although Mr. Gerald

Hardy and Mr. Munro were very successful in keeping up the standard. But no hounds perhaps ever brought more credit to the kennel than do the two, Vandyke and Driver, sketched here. Indeed, there is no story of work done for fox hunting in England more interesting than the way Mrs. Inge, Miss Inge and young Sam Morgan (he will always be "young Sam" to his contemporaries) have, in spite of difficulties of feeding and the many other obstacles to hound breeding, produced such hounds as these. The Atherstone hounds have always been workers, and they have need to be, for, as already pointed out, their country is not all plane sailing for horse or hound. Our artist chose to visit this country in what is perhaps at once the most sporting and possibly also the most difficult district in the Hunt, if we put the Saturday woodlands and coalpits out of the question. There is grass in the Appleby district, and there is a fairly holding clay soil; the fences are strong, hairy and sometimes blind. That is distinctly an awkward sort of place which Morgan is "negotiating" as he comes out of cover alongside his hounds. For once the roundabout expression is the right one, and to get over that fence seems to me to require a mingling of judgment, boldness and discretion on the part of horse and man which perhaps "negotiating" best describes. The landing leaves something to the imagination. It is certainly hairy and rather soft, but we have no doubt that this fence, requiring courage and horsemanship, and especially with hounds chiming and splashing alongside, will be crossed. Presently we see that the huntsman has actually come to grief, and here



VANDYKE (1916) AND DRIVER (1919).



A NASTY FALL. JUMPING INTO A POND!



MRS. INGE, M.F.H.

the artist is characteristically close to nature, for the fence is one of those nasty, trappy, blind, overgrown little ditches which are common enough in this Wednesday country of the Atherstone Hunt.

It is right that we should also see the bright side of hunting, such, indeed, as the Atherstone Hunt gives us our full share of. It is easy to picture here a straight-going fox, a scent and hounds without hover or waver streaming along. A serving scent takes from the huntsman's shoulders all the responsibility for the hunt, and the pack will do better without him. All he has to do is to keep an eye on the pack, and even that is hardly

necessary when they have, so to speak, got *hold* of the line and are not likely to leave it. He can sail over the fences with all the confidence which pace and a bold horse impart to us. A huntsman is a hard-working man with his own cares and troubles, but these are the moments which make all the rest worth while, and which inspired Cross, one of his predecessors in the Atherstone huntsman's post, to say, "I dinna care muckle for wages, but gie me a bellyful of hunting." There are some famous coverts in this part of the Appleby country where Mr. George Moore lives, or Thorpe, where the Rev. William Inge used to entertain the Hunt on hot mutton pies when they came that



SAM MORGAN JUMPING A BLIND PLACE.





THE HUNTSMAN COMES DOWN

way. Thorpe was a small parish with a tiny church, and I remember when they used to tell the story of how when the Warden of All Souls was visiting there and remarked that the church was smaller than the dining-room, the curate is reported to have said, "Yes, and the living not half so good."

At the close of this season Mrs. Inge resigns. There never can be a Mastership like hers again. Her period of hunting as a girl and afterwards coincides with the golden age of the Hunt. She has practically seen the pack formed and the hounds become some of the best in looks or work in the Midlands. When she looks round her field she is surrounded by her own and her father's and mother's friends and the supporters of the Hunt. The farmers are her warm supporters and, if I may put it so, her field keep themselves in order. But changes must come, and the Atherstone Hunt has the good fortune it deserves. Hunts evolve, I sometimes think, their own type of Masters.

Some are so fortunate. The Atherstone have secured Major Hawkins, at the present time Master of the Grafton. What better school for a Master could there be than the Grafton? When Major Hawkins comes to the Atherstone he will find himself in a better scenting country. I have had some happy days in the Grafton Hunt, but I should not call it really a first-rate scenting country. Mr. Hawkins, too, learned patience with harriers. He kept a very pretty pack at Everdon before he took to foxhounds. When Mr. Anstruther Thomson first went to the Atherstone it is said that the famous Sir Richard Sutton came over from the Quorn to see the young Master handle the pack. "You have," said Sir Richard, "a young man who can sit still and see hounds work," and then, as the Master jumped out of the road over a stiff post and rails, added, "and not afraid to get to them either." Once more this will be fulfilled of an Atherstone Master.

X.



JUMPING BIG.

## THE ESTATE MARKET

# THE FIRST QUARTER

**E**ASTER is a movable festival which may be as early as March 22nd and as late as April 25th. Its date, calculated according to the elaborate instructions in the Prayer Book, regulates that of all the movable feasts of the ecclesiastical year. Its varying incidence is anything but convenient to business men, but it happens to fall this year at the close of the first quarter and on the date which, if they had a free hand to decide, the public would probably select for its regular recurrence.

It is a convenient time to glance at the course of business in the first three months of the year. A curious coincidence may be noted in regard to two notable mansions which have been dealt with in the three months. Both Bedgebury and The Deepdene were intimately associated with Thomas Hope, and both have been diverted from their original residential use to institutional and kindred purposes. The great break-up sales on behalf of the Duke of Rutland have proceeded smoothly and successfully, and, when the urban property has been dealt with, the total will doubtless be found to be among the largest on record for this class of transaction.

The tenants everywhere continue to seize the opportunity of acquiring their farms, and in this way large areas of the Duke of Rutland's property and of Lord Harrington's Gawsorth and Bosley estates in Cheshire changed hands before the auction. The county councils have been less prominent than they were at auctions this year, although in Wales and in the Western Counties they have secured a fairly large acreage in open competition. Urban business has had a good overture in the acquisition, by a syndicate, of between 500 and 600 separate properties in Harrogate.

Among the principal sales may be mentioned that of Holme Lacy, Lypiatt Park, many thousands of acres in Yorkshire, on behalf of Lord Leconfield, and about £80,000 worth of the Allerston and Ebberston estates in the same county. Among town houses that of Sir Edgar Speyer is the chief one which has been bought in under the hammer, while there have been some very promising negotiations in regard to other well known properties. Small country houses, in some instances with their contents, have been in good demand.

### CLOSEBURN AND TULLICHEWAN.

**T**HE late Mr. James Campbell's Dumbartonshire estate, Tullichevan Castle, of over 1,030 acres, comes under the hammer of Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley on Wednesday next at Glasgow. Failing a sale in its entirety the estate will be divided into nine lots, of which the chief is, of course, the castle and 360 acres.

The trustees have decided to dispose of Closeburn, Dumfriesshire, extending to about 13,600 acres, and have instructed Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley to offer it for sale by auction early this season. Included in the sale will be Closeburn Hall and the interesting old castle with capital grouse shooting on which 1,000 brace have been obtained in a season, and about two and a quarter miles of salmon fishing in the Nith.

Hallsannery, Westward Ho, has been sold.

### A FAMOUS SIGNBOARD.

**DAVID COX** painted the sign of the Royal Oak Hotel at Bettws-y-coed, which Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley are to sell.

Sir Edward Henry has purchased Cissbury, a residence in the Ascot district, and sales in that locality include also the Red House, Ascot, for many years the residence of the late Lord Stanmore.

The Weobley (Hereford) estate, belonging to the Marquess of Bath, has now passed into the hands of the sitting tenants. Mr. Alfred Mansell conducted the negotiations.

### MEDMENHAM ABBEY.

**BRIG.-GENERAL** Sir Douglas Dawson has decided to dispose of Medmenham Abbey, and it is for sale, with possession, by Messrs. Mabbett and Edge. The carefully restored old house stands in the midst of about 140 acres, between Henley and Marlow, in a position of great privacy and beauty. The owner has control of both banks of the Thames for a mile in all.

### KNEBWORTH PARK FOR SALE.

**T**HE EARL OF LYTTON has instructed Messrs. Daniel Smith, Oakley and Garrard to offer for sale, in the coming summer, about a thousand acres of the outlying portions of the Knebworth estate. There are three farms of from 140 acres to 420 acres, and various pieces of accommodation land and woodland, having a total rental value of nearly £1,000 a year. The property lies on the outskirts of Stevenage, five or six miles from Hitchin and Hertford.

Another auction of outlying portions of a well known estate is that by the same firm on May 19th at Winchester, of 1,800 acres of the Brockwood Park estate at West Meon. Oyster layings and foreshore rights form a not inconsiderable element of the value of the 1,000 acres of Essex land at St. Osyth, which will come under the hammer at Colchester next month.

### HILLINGDON COURT.

**T**WO days have been allotted to the sale of the late Lord Hillingdon's Uxbridge estate of 3,185 acres, Hillingdon Court. The gross rental, excluding the mansion and about 120 acres in hand, is £7,500 a year. But in this case, as in so many others, the present value and the use to which the property has been put up to the present time form no guide whatever to its selling value or its future possibilities.

The greater portion of the land is unquestionably building land ripe for development. It has passed the "accommodation land" stage long ago, and, but for the paralysis of the building trade, would have fallen into the builders' hands earlier, in all likelihood. As it is commended as building land, the agents, Messrs. Daniel Smith, Oakley and Garrard, in conjunction with Messrs. Lofts and Warner, logically and fairly face the fact that new uses may have to be found for the mansion. It is put forward as "very suitable for a school, club or other institution." Possibly a residential hotel would prove a paying venture. The Deepdene affords a precedent for the conversion to such a purpose.

### DENHAM COURT.

**I**T is almost disquieting to find that a similar suggestion has been faced and accepted as, at any rate, worth consideration in the matter of that other Uxbridge mansion, Commander Swinbank's beautiful seventeenth century mansion on the banks of the Colne, Denham Court.

There are only 300 acres of land attached to Denham Court; and its proximity to town, its excellence as a house, and the perfection of its grounds seem to render it exceedingly worthy of continuance, for many a year to come, as a private residence, especially valuable for anyone who wished to entertain on a fairly liberal scale within an hour's motor journey from the City.

At the same time it must be admitted that Denham Court is, as the agents say, "quite the property for a first-class residential or sporting club."

### ROLLESTON HALL.

**T**HERE has been some talk of the contingency of converting Rolleston Hall into an institution. For such a purpose the mansion is well adapted, being of great size and within easy reach of all parts of the country. It is, as a residence, very desirably placed, being within a short distance of the following seats: Rangemore Hall (Dowager Lady Burton), Byrkley Lodge (Sir W. A. Hamar Bass, Bart.), Wicknor Park (Lieutenant-Colonel W. E. Harrison), Beau-Desert (the Marquess of Anglesey), Chartley Hall (Lieutenant-General W. Norris Congreve, V.C.), Sudbury Hall (Mr. A. F. Gretton), Bretby Park (the Executors of Mr. J. D. Wragg), East Lodge (Mr. G. E. Turner), Needwood House (Mr. W. H. Shiers), Holly Bush Hall (Mrs. Hignett), Dove Cliff (Mr. H. S. Harrington), Drakelow (Sir Robert Gresley, Bart.), Calke Abbey (Sir V. Harper Crewe, Bart.) and Foremark Hall.

### THE OTTERSHAW PARK SALE.

**F**OLLOWING their sale of Ordsal, Mr. Sopwith's Cobham residence, and Frimley Park—the original manor house built about

1670, of the Tichborne family, whose monogram adorns the old carved oak staircase—Messrs. Trollope have sold Ottershaw Park, Chertsey. The extent of the estate is about 1,100 acres, and the house is said to have cost Mr. Eckstein over £130,000 to build. The grounds contain a good many features which involved a large expenditure. The purchaser is Miss Dora Schintz, an American.

Sir Egerton Hamond-Graeme is about to dispose of 1,500 acres of land in the Isle of Wight, in the vicinity of Bembridge and Yaverland.

### MEDLEVAL CARVINGS AT LAVENHAM.

**I**N the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the wool trade was flourishing at Lavenham, the Suffolk town near Sudbury, and ten miles from Bury St. Edmunds. The people of Lavenham, of that period and the succeeding centuries, seem to have cared more than was the case in some places for the beautiful as well as the useful in their homes and corporate meeting place. The old Wool Hall illustrates the latter point, and the richly ornamented old houses, such as those in Water Street, the former. One of the Water Street houses is for sale privately, by Messrs. Harrods, freehold, with about an acre of gardens, for £2,000. The house is full of old oak beams, carving and other work of the fifteenth century.

### "SAMSON AND HERCULES" AT NORWICH.

**I**T was in the fifteenth century that Sir John Fastolf—familiar to readers of the Paston Letters—had a mansion in the City of Norwich, and on the site of that mansion were afterwards built the houses now known as "Samson and Hercules" and the adjoining "Augustine Steward's." It was a quaint conceit to put a figure of Samson, of all men, as an upholder of the doorpost. After Fastolf's death the house was occupied by the Duchess of Suffolk and the Countess of Lincoln. The existing houses erected on the site of the older house have been materially altered almost to the extent of being rebuilt, but they are of great age and dignity. The property has just passed under the hammer at Norwich.

### DUKE OF NORFOLK'S SHEFFIELD LAND.

**T**HE DUKE OF NORFOLK's sales of outlying portions of his Sheffield estates have so far produced in private negotiation and at auction about £80,000. Purchases by tenants amounted to about £17,000 before the public sale, which was held by Messrs. Eadon and Lockwood at Sheffield a few days ago. Agricultural land met with a better enquiry than accommodation and building land, and up to £120 an acre was paid for some lots. The auction total was between £60,000 and £70,000.

### MR. ASQUITH'S TOWN HOUSE.

**E**ARLY next month Messrs. Curtis and Henson are to sell 20, Cavendish Square, by order of Mr. Asquith, who has, it is understood, taken a house in Bedford Square. The latter square was formerly a favourite residential centre for lawyers on account of its convenient proximity to the courts and the Inns of Court. One or two eminent counsel have lived in the square within the last few years, but it has lately seemed a fair presumption that the days of Bedford Square as a private residential locality were over. In that square, as in Russell Square and other parts of Bloomsbury, societies and other organisations have gained a foothold, and the once dignified privacy of the quarter has been further encroached upon by the hotels which rear their lofty and unmistakable façades along one side of Russell Square. No insurmountable objection is now raised to the carrying on of a trade or the practising of a profession in the Bloomsbury squares, but it was not always so; in fact, at one time the restrictions were so rigorous that a well known journalist was objected to on the ground that he wrote articles in his house in Gordon Square, and thereby broke a covenant against using the place for professional purposes. It seems incredible to a modern reader, but the agent who represented the writer in question is still, happily, among us to confirm the story. **ARBITER.**



# CORRESPONDENCE

## SELF-CONTAINED COUNTRIES OF THE FUTURE

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—I read with much pleasure your leading article on the above subject. It seems to me all so true, but so hard to get believed by the millions of people who should realise it. If they did, they would then be able to give Governments the necessary authority to do what is needful to achieve all that must sooner or later be done to produce the essential food we require from our own land. The idea that we can rely on other countries indefinitely to supply us with cheap food is a fallacy, and if we do not prepare for the world change that is now in movement, a very difficult time in regard to food costs will be before us. As straws show the way the wind is blowing so do such facts as that New Zealand now imports wheat instead of exporting it. In Australia many who grew wheat in a big way are giving it up, as labour costs make the work insufficiently remunerative; this will mean wheat-growing falling into the hands of men with families who will all work hard, but this system will not produce large exportable surpluses, and with production falling and new nations taking to eating wheat, it may easily happen quite quickly that what we do not produce will cost us huge prices to buy, and that permanently, instead of temporarily as at present, British-grown wheat will be the cheapest to the miller. However, I do not believe any government can permanently take vast sums out of the British farmers' pockets to subsidise the foreign wheat grower, as at present. If it continues, then the wheat area will decrease even faster than it is doing at present.

My hope in the future is that the Government will tell the people the truth, and that is that the British wheat grower is entitled to the world's price for wheat. If this falls below British cost of production, they should tell the people there will be little wheat grown unless the difference between profit and loss is made up. I still have hopes from the tractor and pig, that wheat-growing in England will enable us to produce it more cheaply per bushel than almost any other country; and the reasons are that cultivation by tractor is much cheaper and better than horses, that it can be done at the time of year it should be done, and sown at a period that saves considerable money per acre on seed, and yet gives bigger yields. The next assistance is the pig, which can be fed and used to turn straw into manure at a profit on the feeding. In the past much of this was done by fattening bullocks, but figures have proved the pig does it better both from a farming and a financial point of view. Then, again, your article refers to the large tracts of land in the United Kingdom still to be brought under cultivation, but before this need be done let us cultivate properly the tens of thousands of acres of good farm land equipped with buildings, roads, hedges, ditches and drains. True, in many cases they are in a poor state of repair, the drains not working because the ditches are level with the surrounding land, the hedges so long uncut that when it is done they take five years to grow into good ones again, the buildings with the roof woodwork requiring renewing, and the yards a mass of mud. But money and time will put all these things right for half the cost it took to establish them, and once again land of the kind I refer to on which it was said good farming could not be carried on can be made to grow beautiful crops at paying prices.

In few cases do the owners of such lands either have knowledge or energy to do anything except patch their buildings at the request of tenants who pay a most inadequate rent and even then complain it is too high. Let all such land as I refer to be brought back into efficient cultivation and the buildings, roads, yards, hedges and ditches made good before too much energy is put into land at present unfurnished with farming plant. In some of my land bought in 1918, in the course of my ditching excavations, I am finding tile drains laid every royd., and this on fields the late tenant claimed as worthless, wet, sour land. To see the change in soil texture only a few weeks later when the drains began to run again after at least thirty years' stoppage, is a treat given to few at present. It is, however, waiting for the many to see, who have the faith

to put their money into such work, and the understanding and imagination to realise what this may do for our British farming on our abused and neglected clay soils, really so rich and responsive to correct farming with our mechanical power and basic slag. Such farming is an adventure that never tires, and each success leads to another and greater.—S. F. EDGE.

## THE NAGAS HOME FROM THE WAR.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—The enclosed photographs of Nagas may interest your readers. They were taken in Kohima, the capital of the Naga Hills, Assam, at the time of the Naga Labour Corps' return from France. A big gathering of the clans took place to welcome the men back, and there

## WAGTAILS FLOCKING

TO THE EDITOR.

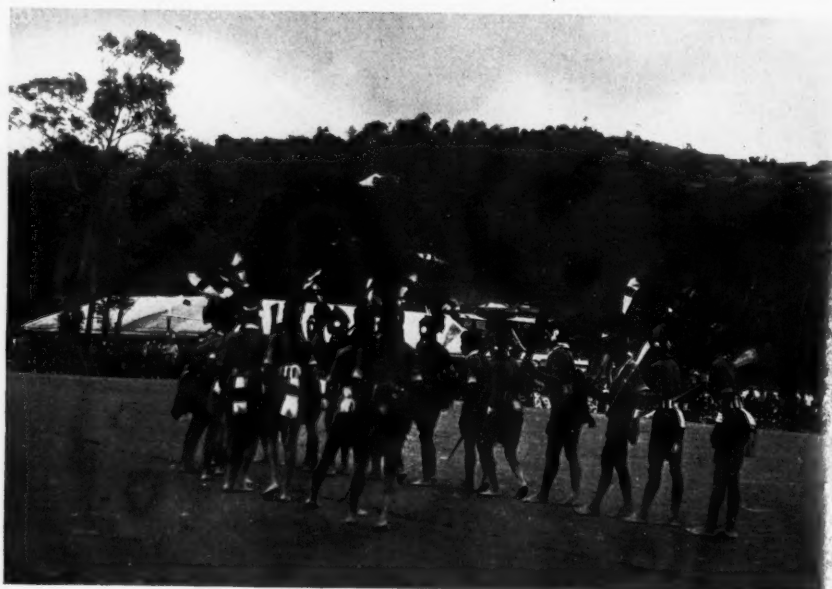
SIR,—I have seen in the Egyptian Delta (Province Dahhalieyeh) about this time of the year a flock of pied wagtails numbering thousands, the brown earth on which they were resting being as invisible as if covered with snow. Finches and birds of similar habit always congregate before migration. I have seen large flocks of goldfinches and quail, I need hardly say, arrive and depart in flocks.—W. J. GARNETT, Royal Colonial Institute.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—With regard to Mr. Jephcott's letter in COUNTRY LIFE of March 20th, pied wagtails are well known to flock during the spring and



A WAR DANCE TO CELEBRATE THE RETURN OF THE NAGA LABOUR CORPS FROM FRANCE.



A GATHERING OF THE CLANS IN THE NAGA HILLS, ASSAM.

were war dances by the various tribes, many of whom are head-hunters. The Angami, Ao, Sema and other Naga tribes speak languages which are totally unintelligible to each other. They dress quite differently and are quite different in appearance, habits and mode of life. The Angami are the only Nagas who cultivate rice. All Nagas eat dogs, and many of them eat snakes, lizards, frogs—in fact, what they can get. They are great hunters and, in the unadministered tracts, head-hunters. It is considered much finer to secure a woman's or child's head than a man's, and for this reason: in order to do so you must enter the hostile village, whereas a man may be waylaid anywhere. For finery, the warriors wear the feathers of the hornbill and busbies of black bearskin, besides strings of shells, brass rings, bead gauntlets, etc.—F. KINGDON WARD.

autumn migrations. In Cheshire flocks varying from half a dozen to fifty appear early in March. They are usually in very smart black and white plumage, and some authorities believe that these are migratory birds which have returned from winter quarters abroad. They usually roost in reeds at the edges of meres or ponds. In the evening of March 22nd, 1916, I saw a flock of at least fifty in the reeds which fringed a little pool. When they saw me they "chis-sicked" loudly to each other; then in small parties they rose from the reeds. There was a strong north-east wind blowing, and the birds were at first carried down-wind, but soon they turned and beat up against it, their long tails streaming and quivering behind like strips of black and white ribbon, until they hovered and pitched again in the reeds. Last October, near Minehead, I noticed flocks of considerable

numbers on the newly ploughed fields; some of them I recognised as young birds by the yellowish tinge on their cheeks. Probably they were gathering before migration. Eagle Clarke observed them passing south in autumn in considerable numbers at the Eddystone Lighthouse. They quite frequently perch on trees. I once saw a bird, anxious over partly fledged young, sit on a tree calling monotonously for half an hour. They also perch on buildings, the ridge of a roof being a favourite vantage ground.—ERNEST BLAKE.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—Referring to the letter from a correspondent in your issue of March 20th under the above heading, I can relate a similar experience. I think the date was February 28th. On walking round our local tennis club ground (in Warwickshire) I noticed about twenty pied wagtails seemingly just resting on the ground; they certainly were not feeding. These rose and topped the fence. I passed out into the road some fifteen yards away, and here for many yards around and in the trees, too, was quite a large flock of these birds. The time would be about 4.30 p.m., I think. I am well within the mark in saying there were upwards of 120 birds in this lot.—E. B. HANDLEY.

PARTRIDGE SHOOTING IN PICARDY.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—I have read with some interest the article signed "Sportsman" under the heading "Partridge Shooting in Picardy," in COUNTRY LIFE of March 20th. It is obvious to me that the writer of that article served in the Fourteenth (Light) Division, in which I also served as a regimental infantry officer, though his identity is unknown to me. In no spirit of criticism I venture to tell you the following experiences: (1) As regards bird life in the Ypres salient in 1915, in November and December of that year I heard birds, though of what sort I

cannot say, in the trees round Potyze Château. (2) The snipers of the battalion I was serving with accounted for quite a number of partridges in and around the trenches in front of Arras and Agny: my company mess was supplied with partridges obtained in this way on several occasions while in the trenches (I do not think this experience was uncommon). (3) A flock of geese in line flew over the trenches towards Arras in June, 1916. The Germans opened fire on them and knocked out the bird flying on the extreme right of the line which thereupon lost its "dressing" completely. (4) An officer in my company while on duty in a front line trench in front of Agny in October, 1916, shot a hawk flying over No Man's Land. When the Fourteenth (Light) Division first went into the trench sector in front of Arras in February or March, 1916, one of the trenches in that sector was called "Boyau Equarisseur." This trench was a small trench which ran into a communication trench subsequently called "Hunter Street."—LIGHT-BOB.

THE GOAT MOTH'S RAVAGES UPON WILLOW TREES.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—Some years ago you published in your Correspondence pages some photographs of the damage caused to willow trees by caterpillars of the goat moth. I am now able to send you a series illustrating the disastrous sequel to the attack of these insects. The contrast between the trees in their full pride and glory and their premature fall and decay is strikingly seen. In the first photograph may be seen the pretty row of willow trees as it was only six years ago. The next photograph shows the type of insect which is able to work such havoc. The larvæ shown are full grown and of a pinkish colour, and their flat, burrowing heads and hairless bodies are clearly seen. Their powerful jaws are aided in their work of destruction by a liquid secretion which has a noticeable odour and which is ejected to soften

the wood attacked. The following two photographs show the climax to the work of destruction. Of the six trees which were standing six years ago, two bare trunks alone stand to-day, their branches having been lopped to forestall crashing. The remaining four have succumbed, one in spite of the fact that it had been lopped. A near view of the perforated trunk of one of the lopped trees gives some idea of the work of the caterpillars underneath the bark.—WM. C. WATERMAN.

[The Goat Moth is usually reckoned among the minor and less harmful of insect pests, and it might be a little difficult to prove that they are entirely responsible for the state of things shown in our correspondent's very interesting photographs.—ED.]

SINGING SANDS.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—*A propos* the recent letter in COUNTRY LIFE on this subject it may interest your readers to know that there are musical sands between the Haven and Studland on the Hampshire Coast. Some three or four years since a lecture was given during an excursion of the Bournemouth Natural Science Society on this subject by Mr. Carus Wilson. Sand collected from the shore into a bowl and beaten by mallets of different forms and sizes emitted nearly all the notes of the musical scale. It is believed the cause of this phenomenon is that the grains of sand in this district are round in shape and exceptionally free from extraneous matter.—FLORENCE MARY GARDINER.



IN FULL BEAUTY SIX YEARS AGO.



ALL THAT IS LEFT OF THEM TO-DAY



THE DESTROYING GOAT MOTH.



ONE OF THE TWO SURVIVORS



# THE HERO OF THE REFORM BILL

Lord Grey of the Reform Bill, by G. M. Trevelyan. (Longmans.)

**G**EORGE MACAULAY TREVELYAN has many excellent qualifications for writing the life of the man whose name will ever be associated with the Reform Bill of 1832. A link between the biographer and his subject is that one was, and the other is, closely connected with the County of Northumberland. The Greys owe much of their character and energy to the bracing air of the north-east coast. The family is one of the oldest in Northumberland. The Middletons possess a longer pedigree, and the Swinburnes have also been associated with the county as long, perhaps, as any other name. The Greys had peculiar characteristics that might make them very suitable subjects for eugenic study. Creevey, in a description of Earl Grey, hits off the characteristics of the race :

A curious stranger would discover no out-of-the-way talent in him, no powers of conversation ; a clever way in *discussion*, certainly, but with no fancy, and no judgment (or very little) in the works either of fancy or art. A most natural, unaffected, upright man, hospitable and domestic ; far surpassing any man one knows in his noble appearance and beautiful simplicity of manners, and equally surpassing all his contemporaries as a splendid public speaker. Take him all in all, I never saw his fellow ; nor can I see any imitation of him on the stocks.

The Greys, as a whole, are renowned in the first place for their integrity. In a phrase that has become a little old-fashioned now, they are men whose word is as good as their bond. As a rule, too, they mingle aristocratic with democratic features. They are renowned for their kindness, hospitality and sympathy with the aspirations of Labour. On the other hand, Byron doted on the "patrician thoroughbred look," which is an inheritance of the Greys. The open air has produced among them many vigorous and often celebrated sportsmen, such as Henry Grey, brother of Viscount Grey, who was killed at Nairobi by a lion just before the War. Viscount Grey himself is renowned as a fisherman, and one is glad to know that even failing eyesight has not ended the enjoyment of his favourite pastime. The late George Grey of Milfield was pronounced by a very competent judge to be the best all-round sportsman of his time. Charles Grey, afterwards the second Earl and the author of the Reform Bill, was a good shot in his early days, though this form of sport ceased to appeal to him afterwards. All are interested in natural history. How else could it be ? They for the most part were brought up close to moor and sea, and moor-fowl and sea-fowl were familiar to them from infancy. Charles Grey was born at Falldon, his uncle at that time living in the old Peel Hotel, which he afterwards converted into the spacious mansion it is now. He presented it to his illustrious nephew. Mr. Trevelyan gives a brief but apt description of both of these places. They equally "breathe the spell of that windy land between the hills and sea which few cast off if they have been bred in it." Howick, which Earl Grey naturally grew to love better than his birthplace even, stands back a mile from the shore between the gaunt ruins of Dunstanburgh and the little port of Alnmouth, to which provisions used to be sent from London by boat. Mr. Trevelyan describes Falldon as a small country house half way between the moors and the sea. He does not mention that it was burned down during the War or give any indication of its being about to be rebuilt in the same style. From these surroundings Charles Grey, after Eton and Cambridge, emerged into public life at the time when revolution, like a great shadow, was brooding over France. He took his seat as Member for the County of Northumberland in 1787. His father had been a supporter of Pitt, but he himself was not bound to any party or any cause. His first speech was made on February 21st, 1787. Of it Addington wrote :

I do not go too far in declaring that in the advantage of figure, voice, elocution and manner he is not surpassed by any Member of the House ; and I grieve to say that he was last night in the ranks of Opposition, from whence there is no chance of his being detached.

It is curious to reflect that a young man so high-minded and generous in temper should have stood in imminent danger of being hanged in 1794. England at the time was suffering agonies of apprehension that the horrors of the French Revolution might extend to this country. He wrote to his future wife :

The first trial, which will be Hardy's, comes on on Thursday. I believe I shall attend it in order to learn how to conduct myself when it comes to my turn. You see by these new constructions of treason they have found a much better way of disposing of obnoxious persons than by sending them to Botany Bay, and one which will save both you and me a great deal of trouble. I am not, however, very ambitious of being classed even with Algernon Sydney.

But for Erskine's skill Hardy would probably have been hanged, but a legal victory saved the situation. Horne Tooke was the next case, and he recognised the signs of the situation

well. He was returning one cold night from Old Bailey to Newgate when a lady admirer pressed forward and put a handkerchief round his neck. "Pray, madam," he said, "be careful, for I am rather *ticklish* at present about that particular place." In the betting at Brooks's Club there is an entry in Grey's handwriting, October 11th, 1794 :

General Fitzpatrick bets Mr. Grey 5 guineas to 1 that Mr. Horne Tooke is hanged before Mr. Pitt.

Be it remembered that it was the time of betting on everything, and although this was a jest, Lord Townshend and Grey had an even guinea on his being hanged. Other examples of this kind of betting are given in a note :

There had been some speculation at Brooks's about Grey's and the Duke of Bedford's matrimonial prospects in the summer, at a time when Grey must have been pressing his suit for Miss Ponsonby's hand. On July 27th, 1794, we read : "Col. Tarleton bets Mr. Grey 5 guineas that he (Grey) is married before the Duke of Bedford." And again on July 30th, 1794, "The D. of Bedford bets Lord Lauderdale ten guineas that neither his grace or Mr. Grey are married on or before July 30th, 1795." The Duke died a bachelor in 1802.

It is not worth while going over the well known ground in the history of the Reform Bill. Grey's convictions deepened as he went along. It had been the hope of the Tories that he would produce a half-hearted Bill which would set the country against him. But they miscalculated. His measure was a strong one for the time and he carried it through with amazing go. Mr. Trevelyan seems to see nothing but satisfaction at the result, but thoughtful readers of this volume who consider all the portents and difficulties of the present hour may well entertain some doubt as to whether democracy in the end is likely to succeed better than aristocracy. If the latter was government by a class it was at least by an enlightened and broad-minded class, able at critical moments to look far beyond their own interests and legislate for the benefit of the country at large. It is easy to point out defects in the system, and equally easy to show that in government by the democracy there are at least equal weaknesses. As a matter of fact, there is no greater delusion than the belief that votes represent the deliberate convictions of the people. Those who use them are swayed hither and thither by the passions of the moment, and organised Labour is resulting in a suppression of individual opinion far greater and more dangerous than anything resulting from the system of rotten boroughs. When Labour votes, as it generally does, in blocks, it is ridiculous to suppose that the result represents the individual opinion of the voters. For example, the miners at the present moment are so dominated by their leaders that it is impossible to get them to listen to reasonable argument on the other side. They do not trust each to his own intelligence, but record their vote in obedience to the mandate of a few who have neither the capacity nor the means of ascertaining the general opinion.

**Take Joy Home**, by S. C. Nethersole. (Mills and Boon, 7s. net.)

THE action in *Take Joy Home* is of the extremely slow description, and the story is fashionable enough to begin with the youth of the heroine's father, and with quite a large slice of the history of her great-aunt, while it culminates in her own second marriage. It is certainly a readable book, for the authoress loves life in the country and especially she loves drawing provincial character. The Durllocks of Poppets Parlour are creations of real merit. They are a farming family, and it is hard to decide whether one prefers Jethro, the gentle, almost "half-baked" younger brother ; his elder, the capable, loyal, narrow master-farmer William, who first "takes Joy home" as his wife ; or their old, hard yet essentially motherly mother. There are many well-drawn characters in the story, including the second Mrs. Saynt and her daughter Fluff, both sketched with skill and a pen lightly and piquantly dipped in feminine spite. One regrets that such characterisation should be allied with plot so slight, and with a great many chapters in the first person singular which, perhaps against the writer's intention, give one an impression of something approaching self-satisfaction. The heroine's extraordinary attitude of disapproval towards her own baby son is the falsest note in what might possibly be called a pastoral andante.

**The Death Drum**, by Margaret Peterson. (Hurst and Blackett 6s. 9d.)

TOM DAVIS was the son of a white man and a native woman, and when his only and fondly loved sister was betrayed by an Englishman who protested that one "couldn't marry a native," he set himself to avenge that sister by making her lover's own sister marry him. How he won Sylvia's love and brought her to his lonely plantation out in Uganda and tried to enjoy his vengeance is the theme of *The Death Drum*. Sylvia, the English girl, is too true and tender for him ; he cannot torture her love with his own scorn, for he learns to love her himself, and at last dies that she may be saved from the misery of widowhood to a man of his blood. It is an original tale and well told save for some rather slipshod phrases here and there. There is a native rising, a feast on dead man's flesh and much fighting ; but there is very much more in it of fine thought and feeling than a mere *résumé* of its plot would serve to suggest.

# THE OPENING OF FLAT RACING

A ROUT OF "LINCOLNSHIRE" FAVOURITES.

EVIDENTLY it is destined that those well clothed and generously nourished gentlemen who make it their business in life to accommodate the many who wish to make wagers on horses, shall prosper and wax fatter and fatter on the issues of the big races. I mean in particular those races which are associated with betting, not only on the racecourse, but throughout the country. I naturally recall to mind the Derby last year, which Grand Parade won at 33 to 1; the St. Leger, which found the odds-on Buchan hopelessly trounced and Keysoe winning at 100 to 8; and the Cambridgeshire, which Brigand won at 33 to 1. And now as I write there has been the Lincolnshire Handicap of 1920, with Furious triumphant at 33 to 1, involving, of course, the absolute rout of the heavily backed horses.

Make no mistake about it, there has been some heavy betting on the race. It has been going on for weeks past, and the bookmakers must have had a wonderful race. Practically throughout the piece Sir George Noble's Bruff Bridge has been favourite, until on Wednesday last his price was cut down to 5 to 1. Then Sir Berkeley was a tremendous medium for some heavy wagering, especially among the big operators. His owner,

Furore, the half-brother that had won the Cesarewitch. Furious was not of much account last year, probably because he was troubled with splints and could not gallop on the hard ground, but he certainly came into prominence when he came out as a hurdler during the National Hunt season just closed. He won four races, but was beaten by both White Heat and Planet for the Champion Hurdle Cup at Gatwick early in March. Up to that point I had fancied him for the Lincolnshire Handicap in the belief that he had good speed, that he would be fit, and that he had the nice weight of 7st. 3lb. I was not so keen after seeing him run indifferently for the Champion Cup, yet he rebuked me for my want of faith by winning this Lincolnshire Handicap in quite brilliant style.

What of the others? Bruff Bridge simply ran himself to a standstill and failed to stay. Sir Berkeley ran fairly by finishing fourth, but he was much expected to do better. He looked extraordinarily well, but it may be that the handicappers had taken too high an estimate of his capabilities. Violoncello, like Bruff Bridge, failed to stay, but Monteith galloped gamely and would save many of his backers by getting third place just in front of Sir Berkeley. Apart from the result, perhaps the chief

surprise of the race to me was the very bold show made by Scatwell under top weight of 9st. 11lb. Lord Glanely's horse did, indeed run a great race in the circumstances, for he fairly and squarely beat all except the winner.

The two-year-old racing at Lincoln was quite interesting. The first important winner of the season of that age is Mr. S. B. Joel's Napolyon, a son of Polymelus and St. Josephine. He won the Brocklesby Stakes in really good style from Mr. Ernest Tanner's White Fang, the first progeny of Call o' the Wild and Farimond, a filly belonging to Mr. W. H. Dixon. The second favourite, Mr. Anthony de Rothschild's Valiosa, a daughter of Cicero and Lindoiya, was well beaten. She is light, narrow, on the small side, and still backward. Yet she had been fairly well galloped. Napolyon on the other hand is a very fine colt, having size, quality and a great suggestion of liberty and possibilities of improvement. It is odd how he stood out from the

field in looks just as the same owner's Lacrosse did a year ago. And he won his race, too, in the same nice style, though last year's winner may have shown more greenness. He was merely cantering in the first furlong or two and Carslake touched him with the whip on either side. This straightened him and had the effect of sending him about his business until he was soon commanding the field and leading. Then when once in front he began to look about him and had to be kept at it to win by two lengths.

Another nice horse of the same age to win was Mr. W. H. Dixon's Bumble Bee. He came in first for the Lincoln Plate, but then was disqualified—harshly as I thought, for he was clearly the best and the alleged interference appeared so trifling—in favour of Mr. Logan Kidston's Contractor, a bay colt by Prospector. This one is strong and well grown, but rather plain and I much preferred the winner. He is a really nice horse, with a lot of quality and power. Mr. S. B. Joel ran one called Donai in this race. He was said to be only slightly inferior to Napolyon. However, he ran only moderately, and if the form is correct, then the Lincoln Plate form may be better than that shown in the Brocklesby. I should, however, doubt it, though the trainer of Bumble Bee declared he had tried the colt to be appreciably better than Farimond, third to Napolyon.

PHILLIPPOS.



W. A. Rouch.

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FURIOUS, THE OUTSIDER WINNER OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE HANDICAP.

Mr. James White, had let himself go and had made savers in the cases of Monteith and Bruff Bridge. Take also the case of Monteith. The stable fancy for this horse had long been an open secret, and all classes of the community who are interested in horse racing would have been winners by his success. A leading bookmaker confessed to me before the race that so heavy had been the betting that he would be very hard hit over either Bruff Bridge, Monteith or Sir Berkeley winning. Instead he has won a very large sum. I mention these things to show what was involved by the failure of any well backed horse to win, for, apart from the leading favourites, there was also a very large investment in the aggregate made on Mr. Anthony de Rothschild's Violoncello. This horse was actually backed down to 7 to 1, and started equal second favourite with Bruff Bridge.

Let me tell as briefly as may be of their fate. It was settled for them by the four year old hurdler Furious, who made the whole of the running and won easily by three lengths. So in the course of a minute or two the issue which had been debated for weeks past was abruptly, even rudely decided. The winner is a son of Earla Mor and Rappel, and is owned by Mr. Clarence Hatry. It was passed on to him by Mr. H. Ellis, who bought the horse as a yearling. He had previously done well with



# THE HARLEQUIN JACKET

By C. M. PRIOR.

THE proceedings of the Court of Chancery do not as a rule afford much entertainment to the sporting world, consequently the recent case of "*re* William Watt, decd., Eyre & others *v.* Beverley Race Company," has not attracted the attention it might have done, or astonishment would have been expressed that the highly respected family of Watt, so identified with Yorkshire racing, should apparently be at variance with the Beverley Race Company.

Rather more than a hundred years ago there were no more popular colours on Northern racecourses than the Harlequin of Squire Watt of Bishop Burton, who, besides winning the great St. Leger no less than four times as the owner of the immortal Blacklock, has indelibly inscribed his name on the annals of the Turf.

Mr. Richard Watt, who succeeded his uncle in 1803 in his extensive estates in Lancashire and Yorkshire, being then only sixteen years old, had been brought up in an atmosphere of sport, and at that early age found himself possessed of a large fortune, and, incidentally, with a stock of forty-three thoroughbred animals in the paddocks at Bishop Burton.

The young squire immediately showed his predilection for both silk and scarlet, and though he somewhat tired of the chase as years went by, his love of racing and interest in his stud lasted to the end. He was but eighteen years old when he entered into a formal legal agreement with his neighbour, Sir Mark Masterman Sykes, to hunt the country around their respective seats in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and to that end he undertook to subscribe £2,000 a year for five years, and Sir Mark £1,000 annually for the same period, "to keep and provide a proper huntsman, and two proper whippers-in, together with twelve able horses, to hunt with the said hounds for the said term of five years, in such manner, order, and condition, that the said hounds may be regularly hunted, during the several seasons in the said term, at least three days a week, and more frequently if required by the said Sir Mark Masterman Sykes and Richard Watt, with such a district of country as shall hereafter be agreed upon, and fixed by the said parties," etc., from which it is clear that as lawyers are at present, so were they in the past, and also that, even in those early days, it required a mentionable sum to maintain a pack of foxhounds.

The previous year Richard Watt had run his first horse at the then important meeting at Newton, near his Lancashire estates, and two years later, at the age of nineteen, he fairly launched himself on the Turf by registering as his colours the Harlequin cap and jacket, just surrendered by Sir John Lade, and won his first race at York with the famous John Jackson in the saddle, the commencement of a partnership which was destined to lead to so many triumphs.

Mr. Watt can have had but little of the fatalist in his nature, or he would scarcely have chosen a cap and jacket with such an unlucky history. Since racing colours had first been registered by the Jockey Club in 1762 the Harlequin had known but two owners, the eccentric George Hanger (afterwards Lord Coleraine), and the somewhat more than eccentric Sir John Lade. Both of them had been almost inseparable companions and sworn intimates of the Prince Regent, in those glorious days of pleasure at Brighton and elsewhere, and each of them in turn had laid down the Harlequin as their fortunes were exhausted, and their ever increasing debts had made a prison their temporary home.

The luck of the Harlequin was changed, however, when it came into the keeping of a hard-headed young Yorkshire squire, and from that day to the present time it has remained in his family, honoured and unsullied, and perchance may yet once again be prominent on our racecourses. Fortune certainly came to Richard Watt with both hands full, belying Shakespeare's assertion to the contrary, for, in addition to four St. Legers, many of the great races of the North fell to his share, and it was perhaps only by a fluke that his greatest horse of all, Blacklock, was deprived of the Doncaster race, which appeared a certainty for him, by being beaten on the post.

Only three or four of our most celebrated horses have been honoured by being painted life-size. Lord Zetland has one such picture of Voltigeur, which was himself a grandson of Blacklock; and Lord Chaplin had another of his favourite Hermit (which came from Mr. Watt's breed on his dam's side), which can be seen in the corridor of what was Stafford House, now the London Museum; but at Bishop Burton is not only a full-length portrait of Blacklock, by Dalby, some of whose paintings almost approach a Herring in their excellence, but his skeleton also is carefully preserved in a glass case in the

saddle-room. Thus, both in the bone and on canvas, one may still gaze on the "unsundering countenance" of the famous brown, as displayed in his very prominent convex skull, and, appropriately enough, at his feet lie the Harlequin cap and jacket, which he had helped to make so formidable to all opponents at York and Doncaster.

The squire, in his habit as he lived, hangs over the mantelpiece in the billiard-room at Bishop Burton, depicted scrupulously well dressed, as was his invariable custom, attired in the garb of the Yorkshire gentleman of the day, and the Racing Calendar by his side plainly indicates the style of literature with which he was most familiar. His high colour betrays that irritability of temper from which his several trainers, whether old Tommy Sykes, Dick Shepherd, or Marson, all suffered in turn, and surely no jockey ever had to face a more irascible or disgusted owner than did John Jackson, after he had apparently thrown away the St. Leger on Blacklock, though, when the storm had blown over, no master could be more generous when occasion required.

Brought up amid such surroundings, it is but small wonder that the old squire's sons imbibed his taste for the Turf. His successor, Captain Frank Watt, who bred Strathconan among several other good horses, did not long survive his father, dying at Epsom on Kingcraft's Derby Day, and was succeeded by his brother William, whose name has been recalled by the recent action in the High Court of Justice.

On the latter's deathbed in 1874, the ruling passion being still strong within him, Mr. William Watt, mindful of the long association his family had with racing, in making his last will bequeathed the sum of £3,000 to the Stewards of the Beverley Race Meeting to provide a piece of plate in perpetuity, to be called the Watt Memorial Plate, and inscribed with his name, to be run for each year at the Summer Meeting at Beverley, and, consequently, this prize has figured in the programme since 1876.

He also left a further sum of £2,000 to the Ralph Hansby Charity in his village, in which, as owner of the soil, he was much interested, and in order to guard against any possible apathy in racing matters at Beverley in time to come, he added a proviso, that should a race meeting not be held there for two successive years, his gift of £3,000 for the Plate should revert to the Ralph Hansby Charity, little thinking that this stipulation would hereafter lead to an action at law.

In 1915 the Government temporarily stopped racing throughout the country, the racecourse at Beverley being meanwhile converted into an aerodrome, and, loyally remembering the last wishes of their benefactor, the Race Company as an act of grace paid over annually to the Hansby Charity the sum they would otherwise have expended on the plate, till such time as racing should be resumed. The attention of the Charity Commissioners in London was drawn to the circumstance, and although the Commissioners were well aware that the races were stopped perforce by Government, and to be revived immediately after the War, they did not hesitate to take advantage of the situation that had arisen.

Consequently, in view of the fact that races had not been held at Beverley for two successive years, the Charity Commissioners determined to avail themselves of the above-mentioned clause in the will and attempt to lay their hands on Mr. Watt's legacy, though in opposition to the advice of counsel. One wonders if the Charity Commissioners considered that by so doing they were carrying out the wishes of the testator, which presumably is the function of their office, when they forced his present-day representative to become a plaintiff in an action with endeavour to deprive the Beverley Race Company of their cherished Watt Memorial Plate.

It should be explained that Mrs. Eyre, cited as co-plaintiff, widow of the late Mr. Ernest Hall Watt, is chairman of Hansby's Charity at Bishop Burton, and zealously maintains the traditions of the family, more especially as regards its association with racing at Beverley. It must, therefore, have been with very mingled feelings that Mrs. Eyre found herself forced to pose as a joint-plaintiff in an action, the successful issue of which would have been in direct opposition to her personal wishes.

On the case being heard the plaintiff's counsel said he regretted proceedings should have been taken against the defendants, whom he acknowledged had behaved in the most liberal manner. He could not argue that the "gift over" (to the Ralph Hansby Charity) had taken effect, as it was bad in law, quite apart from the *force majeure* under which the defendants

had acted, as it had been decided in a previous case in the Court of Appeal in 1895 that such a gift over was void, and it could only be over-ruled by the House of Lords. The Charity Commissioners were aware of this previous decision when they directed the trustees of the local Hansby Charity to issue the summons, and had thus entered upon this action forewarned.

Mr. Justice Russell dismissed the case, granting the defendants their costs, and said he regretted that the law did not permit him to make an order for payment of costs "in the

quarter where he would have wished," *i.e.*, the Charity Commissioners, who, in common with other corporations, have "no body to be kicked, or soul to be damned," nor, apparently in this case, any funds on which an order for costs could be made; thus the Hansby Charity were mulcted in them.

While congratulating the Beverley Race Company on the result, the action of the Charity Commissioners will certainly not commend itself to the world at large, and the Ralph Hansby Charity may be excused in wishing for the future to be saved from their friends.

## COLOUR IN HORSES IN PRIMITIVE, PREHISTORIC AND EARLY HISTORIC DAYS.—II

BY THE REV. GERALD S. DAVIES, MASTER OF THE CHARTERHOUSE.

### DAPPLING.

IN an earlier article I asked the question—I did not attempt to answer it—What is the physical explanation of dappling in the body coat of horses? In other words, what is the process which the factor for dapple sets in motion among the pigment cells so as to cause the darker colour to collect in a kind of network pattern around the circles and patches of lighter colour which it encloses? I do not find the question answered or touched by any authority. Darwin, indeed "Animals and Plants," Vol. I, page 58, suggests, but does not insist, that dappling is a modified expression of the tendency to striping in horses. But this only puts our question one stage further back: by what process does the factor for striping act on the pigment cells to make them colour the hairs, darkening certain portions into stripes and striped patterns? I have nothing to offer on such a point.

But Darwin's view brings us up against difficulties. It is, of course, the opinion of many naturalists that the primeval horse was a dun and that he was striped. Professor J. Cossar Ewart ("Peniculi Experiments," London, 1899) believes that the striping was something between the Somali zebra and the common zebra. Elsewhere in the book he speaks of it as probably resembling the markings of the mountain zebra, the most closely patterned of all. For myself, while accepting the view that the ground colour was probably dun, I fail to believe that the striping and barring was so close as in any of these varieties, or even in the quagga proper. It seems to me more reasonable to think that the primeval striping was very much less in quantity, especially upon the body itself. The argument for any striping at all lies in the fact that striping or barring occurs with some frequency on the forearm and about the knees and hocks of Norwegian dun and buffy bay ponies (and less frequently in other breeds)—and in the course of a good many journeys in those parts I have seen a good number—far more than with any other breed. I have never seen any with stripes on the body, but only on the legs, though Professor Ewart figures one with "tattooing" on the face. But the markings, though commonest in Scandinavia, occur also in other breeds and even in Arabs. They are commonest with newly born foals and often disappear very soon. Their existence, however, no matter how long or how short a time they last, is, of course, a strong argument that barring or striping, especially on the legs—body striping is very rare indeed—was a feature of the primeval horse, though it has since diminished almost to non-existence.

Now, if dapple is really only a modified form of the accepted "tendency to striping" in horses, then it seems to follow that the factor which produces the former (dapple) must be very closely akin to that which produces the latter (stripes), if not the same. How comes it, then, that striping is so great a rarity, while dappling is so common that one may call it universal? In a walk in London in June or July, when horses are in their summer coat, you may count dapples by the score or the hundred, according to the length of your walk. You will wear out many a pair of boots before you light upon a horse which shows stripes. The bearing of this fact seems to be this—that if the factors for dappling and striping were so cognate as to be mere modifications of the one of the other, we should almost inevitably see quite a good number of horses showing the little bars about the forearms and hocks which interest us so much in the Norwegian ponies. As a matter of fact, the number of horses which could show such bars are, in all the British Isles, probably not more than one in a hundred thousand, the horses which show dapple probably in several millions. But here, of course, we are at guesswork. Undoubtedly the proportion of dappled to striped is enormous, and suggests that the same factor, or even a cognate factor, is not concerned with both.

On this interesting point, indeed, opinions vary. Charles Darwin, while keeping an open mind, believes all our horses to be derived from a single ancestor—he also believes, by the way, that his colour was dun. Sanson, the French authority, gives a double origin, christening the two ancestors "Cheval Africain" and "Cheval Mongolique." Professor J. Cossar Ewart, in his

chapter on the making of the Shetland, argues for a triple descent—the Steppe, the Forest, and the Plateau type. While Captain Hamellin Smith asks for no fewer than five original parents. (Pietremont claims no fewer than eight localities as centres for the original domestication of the horse. This, of course, is not the same thing as claiming eight original ancestors.) Where views thus differ, one may be forgiven for holding one's own opinion, which is that all our breeds of horses in the Eastern Hemisphere have been developed from a single original ancestry in the Far East (possibly around the desert of Gobi), and that the offspring of this original passed westward—the passage taking many ages—in two main streams, the northern past the Khirgis Plain and round the lower end of the Urals into Russia, and so northwards through Finland and Sweden into Norway; while the southern line, passing through Persia, Mesopotamia and Syria, made its way across the Isthmus of Suez into North Africa. The spread in each case must have come about partly by natural distribution (not to any great extent), partly in company with the many westward invasions, and partly by "peaceful penetration" through the medium of commerce. And these two main lines had many bifurcations and endless ramifications. One such bifurcation probably took place near the head of the Persian Gulf, a line breaking off north-eastwards into Asia Minor and thence into Greece proper; the Northern main branch sending out a similar bifurcation in North Russia and supplying the Baltic Provinces and adjoining lands. And the endless ramifications from both these main lines resulted under human selection, and also to some extent through natural selection under local differences of climate, food, surroundings, in shaping in process of years the various breeds of horses whose differences seem to the uninitiated too great to allow of a common origin. When the first rough dun ponies began to wander westwards from their primeval home, who would have believed that they should, in some unknown tale of centuries, give to man the Shire horse and the Sheltie, the Arab and the Norway pony—an Eclipse, a Gladiator, an Ormonde, a Tetrarch? Yet such, I am convinced, has been the case. And the changes and developments of colour are no more extraordinary than the changes in shape and size and speed. It is not more extraordinary or more difficult of acceptance than the development of the little four-toed hyracotherium, a tapir-like object no bigger than a pig, into the single-toed, hooved animal which first deserved to be called a horse. And this development has now been generally accepted.

My conclusion, then, is (1) that the primeval horse was not a closely striped animal, but, rather, one with a buff or dun body and but few stripes, and that he carried that garb through many ages till the day when man took in hand to domesticate him. (2) That as domestication progressed, the strong, bright colours which we know in horses—brown, bay, chestnut, grey—were developed and proved slowly too potent for the older type, which disappeared save as an occasional survival. (3) That dapple was developed under domestication *pari passu* with colour itself and after striping had practically ceased. (4) In answer to the question: How comes it that vestiges of stripe are so much more common in the northern horse? I would say that it is due to the fact that the northern horse remained in a wild condition on the Steppes that lay along his route (Khirgis plains, Russian plains, etc.), or in a feral condition, much longer than the southern branch, whose route lay much more among the incipient civilisations of those parts. Domestication for this branch was probably speedier, more intimate, more complete, resulting at an earlier date in the production of the southern types, among which the Arab breed stands highest. (5) It will be seen that the above views attempt no answer as to the physical process by which dapple is produced: no answer as to the chemical action by which the pigments are gathered into stripe or circle. That remains for the biologist to work out for us.

I need merely add the following consideration. If the primeval horse was a closely striped or barred animal, why did he in the lapse of ages cease to be so? Someone will answer: "Because that garb was too conspicuous and dangerous, and natural selection, acting through the natural enemies of the



horse, did away with it." The obvious retort is: "If that be so, surely natural selection was either asleep or did its work very badly to allow an elaborate pattern of coat, so dangerous to its possessor, to develop to such a point merely to have to destroy it again and to set about making a safer and more sober suit." And for a comment on the view, turn for a moment to East Africa, where till recently the plain and plateau were covered with zebras clad in the most intricate of patterns. Seventy years ago, in the days of Gordon Cumming, they were still there in countless thousands. Natural selection had left them in full enjoyment of their blazers. It was not before the spread of rifles and of rifle-using man that the diminution came about as the result of human extermination—on which, we should always remember, natural selection does not calculate.

Now, some big-game hunters assure us that the stripes of the zebra are conspicuous and revealing. Other naturalists, not often hunters, claim that the stripes are protective, and that they conceal the zebra in the reedbeds and forests (where, by the way, he is said never to be found!). Theodore Roosevelt, whose first-hand observations of big game are of great value, asserts that the zebra is at all times and in all places most conspicuous, except under the full blaze of a semi-tropical sun, when all colours alike are blurred. He adds that the zebra's coat is in no sense protective or cryptic, and that the zebra, which is a dweller in the open, owes his protection—which, to judge by his numbers, must have been a pretty good one—to his speed and his alertness.

And the conditions of life for the primeval horse in his early home did not differ largely from that of the African zebra. For both the factor for safety lay in their speed and wariness, and sometimes also in a pair of handy heels. For both the arid pasture and the stony wilderness provided the means of life. The enemies of the African zebra—the lion, the leopard, the hunting dog—were not less numerous nor less dangerous than the enemies of the horses of the Gobi—the leopard and the wolf. And if the stripe of the zebra could survive all these perils in his countless thousands nearly up to to-day, why did the horse, under similar conditions, have to part with his stripes? I confess that I prefer to see the primitive horse clad in a whole-coloured coat of modest dun or weak bay with but few stripes in places—not so very much more striped, indeed, than the most marked dun Norwegian pony of to-day. But so far we have had to grope a good deal in the dark. Inference, conjecture, imagination may all contribute to create for us possibilities and probabilities. They cannot give us anything which can be called knowledge. It is just from these very elements that prehistoric study gains its chief fascination. It will long escape the fate of being petrified into an exact science.

The curtain, indeed, is lifted very late, and none too fully even then. The civilisation of Egypt had run some thousands of years before we hear or see anything of our friend the horse. He never, as a matter of fact, took his place among the reliefs and wall paintings of the Egyptians with the same characteristic strength with which they handled other animals. He was, it is thought, a late introduction, and came into Egypt from the north-east together with the Hyksos, or shepherd kings, of the nomad race who settled in the Delta. If this be correct, it would represent the first arrival of the horse in North Africa (always remembering the extinction of an earlier geologic horse). And if the animal indeed came into that continent with the nomads from the north-east, it strangely fits in with the view that a southern branch of the horse—Ridgway and Sanson would call it *Equus africanus* or *Libycus*—came along westward *via* Persia and Syria into Africa, developing as it went the eastern breeds, "Arabs," "Barbs," "Turks," departing more and more from the type of the northern horse, which meanwhile was making his way *via* Russia to the lands of Northern Europe. But to return to our early Egyptian horse. Whether he came with the Hyksos or no, he certainly did not go away with them. For when, somewhere about 1600 B.C., the shepherd kings were expelled bag and baggage, the horse, not, perhaps, in great quantity, remained behind: and in the nineteenth dynasty, about the year 1300 B.C., we find him for the first time represented on the walls of the Ramesseum at Abu Simbel, where the chariot of Rameses II (believed to be the Pharaoh of the Oppression), in the various scenes of his victories, is horsed by very leggy, high-crested animals, showing that, though the horse had not taken his place among the domestic utilities of life, he had become the servant of royal pomp and war. With regard to the type of these animals, Prisse d'Avesnes says they are tall, like the Nisæans described by Herodotus, having arched necks, high pasterns, long and fine limbs, small feet, long tail. He says he has recognised the breed in a special type which he has himself seen in Dongola.

With regard to colour, Sir E. A. Wallis Budge tells me that it is not safe to trust the Egyptian artists in that respect. The horses are always a dark brown, so dark that by an evening light they show as blacks. In answer to my question, he says that he has never seen a white or grey horse in an Egyptian painting.

We have done our duty in examining examples from the oldest civilisation, but we have learnt little enough from them. We learn even less from the Assyrian reliefs, where nearly all traces of colour have long departed from the alabaster. It is not till we get to Greece, and then not from its art but from its literature, that we reach some knowledge, though of course

the date, at earliest, is not really early when compared with Egypt or Assyria. Whatever age we assign to the Homeric poems—it is not a discussion for COUNTRY LIFE—the Pyramids were very, very ancient before their day. They describe to us a time when horse racing and, still more, chariot racing, as well as horse breeding were well developed and widely spread. The Greek thoroughbred had come to stay. He had probably or even certainly reached Greece in Europe through the much larger Greece in Asia Minor. He was, in fact, an offshoot from that same southern branch of the horse whose line westwards ran, as we have seen, into Egypt and North Africa. Homer (if I may be permitted to call him so) gives us plenty of centres where the horse was bred—Argos, "horse-breeding Argos," Pylos, Sikyon, Thessaly, the Troad, etc. The fact that the colour is pretty often specified seems to show that attention was paid to the detail, though the colours are varied enough to show that it was not made a primary aim.

In the twenty-third Iliad we have in four hundred lines or so a wonderfully vivid description of the chariot race which Achilles instituted at the funeral of Patroclus, his own dead charioteer. It is interesting to observe that the second prize was a mule in foal; the first prize was a lady of much accomplishment, besides a very large cup. Stewards of race meetings of to-day, why not take a hint?—"a beautiful lady added to a cup of the value of," etc. In other respects, Achilles, who acted as steward, clerk of the course, judge, and a good many other things besides, was, I regret to own, pitifully incapable in most of these capacities. The conduct, for example, of the god and goddess, Apollo and Athena, the only two personages of that class present, was deplorable, and in modern days would have secured their instant warning off any racecourse from Ascot to the Welsh Harp. It is told, however, as an ordinary incident. But the real interest for us arises from the fact that as the horses came in sight, Idomeneus, who was sitting high up on the stand, had a violent quarrel with Ajax as to who was leading. He declared, quite rightly, that it was Diomedes, who was driving the Trojan pair which had been captured from Æneas, and he knew one of them by his rosy or bloody chestnut colour (*φαινύει*) and the moon-shaped mark on the forehead. How they bet about it, and how Achilles quieted them by saying that if they would only be patient they would soon know—the argument might seem to lack conviction to backers—and how the red chestnut with the white moon did actually win hardly concerns us here.

Achilles himself ran nothing on this occasion, being more or less in mourning. But he had horses of great merit, which he declared to be far away the best of all. The best of these was a mare called Xantha (*ξανθα*), "sorrel," and he had others of the same colour. Automedon had a pair called Xanthos and Balios, "sorrel" and "dapple." There are three persons in the Greek host before Troy known as Melanippus ("Black Horse"). And there were whites and greys about—for Rhesus, King of Thrace, had white horses, and Jason of Thessaly was called Leucippus ("white" or "grey horse"). But nothing on the question of colour is more telling than the lament of Nestor in the eleventh Iliad, uttered after a bad set-back for the Greeks, when the old brigand bemoans his old age and wishes he were back at the day when, in a border feud with Ithymoneus of Elis, whom he killed with his own hand, he had driven off one hundred and fifty sorrels, all mares and many with foals at foot, and brought them by night to Pylos. This estimable old savage, by the way, held something of the views of Lord Glasgow, whose annual battues among his unnamed failures "by Young Melbourne, dam by Toxophilite," etc. (these, however, were done in mercy in his case), are well remembered by us older ones. For his son Antiochus, when his father's horses are getting beaten, assures them that Nestor will cut their throats if they don't win! But enough has been said to assure us that chestnut or sorrel was the most favoured colour in Homeric days, and there I leave the subject.

In later Greek days, the times of the Greek vase paintings both of the primitive and of the later periods, we find what seem to be blacks, bays or sorrels, and whites in plenty. So, too, in the Etruscan tomb called "Del Barone" at Corneto (Tarquinia) in Etruria, we find a black, a white and a sorrel very distinctly represented.

But the idea of this article has been to deal rather with the earliest prehistoric days of the horse, bringing the subject down only into the realm of remote history. In the later classical days, such as those of Alexander the Great (whose charger, Bucephalus, by the way, according to Xenophon, was a black with a white star), the colour of horses, as we think of it now, had been settled very much into its present conditions. Though "the balance of power" may shift a little as this great sire or that passes on his colour to his progeny, it is hardly to be expected that we shall see any further developments of colour, or any very large change in numerical proportions—unless, indeed, we some day find ourselves in possession of our threatened piebald all-conqueror—which, however, if the scientists are to be trusted, is a practical impossibility, as the factors for its production have long died out of the thoroughbred. It is safe, indeed, to predict that no colours will be added to or taken from the annual list of foals in the Stud Book unless, indeed, the entrance of the half-bred—as he is now rated—into that *sanctum sanctorum* should bring in again some colours that had died out of it.

## WAGGLING AND WAGGLERS

GOLFERS are in no immediate danger of becoming stereotyped. They still exhibit a highly entertaining variety of styles, and some swing over their heads and some round their stomachs. Nevertheless, there are not, I think, quite so many agreeable eccentricities of style to be seen on the links as there were in the days when nearly every English player had begun golf after he had lost the lissome and monkey-like powers of youth. This reflection was forced upon me the other day when, in a moment of delicious laziness, I opened the Badminton volume at random. I lit upon the classical passage wherein Mr. Hutchinson describes various styles—the "Recoil," the "Pendulum," the "Double-Jointed," the "Surprise" and the "Disappointment." Then it occurred to me with a sudden pang that the "Disappointment" had almost disappeared. Here is the description of its votaries: "In addressing they bring the club up well above the shoulder, so that you imagine that they are on the immediate point of striking it—instead of which, they arrest the club, with a jerk, just as its head comes down to the ball, and it is with a sense of disappointment that you realise that this manful effort was but a preliminary to the real stroke which immediately follows." How well that description recalls to the mind many stout, perspiring gentlemen of the eighties and nineties. I allude to their date, not to their scores.

Nevertheless, the waggle—and the "Disappointment" was really a preliminary waggle rather than a complete style—is still one of the most characteristic and entertaining things about each one of us who tries to play golf. It depicts in miniature, as a rule with extraordinary fidelity, the swing that is to come. Very few of us, in this respect, come in like lions and go out like lambs or *vice versa*. The leonine and ferocious waggle foreshadows the ferocious swing, though the actual result may be lamb-like in mildness. So generally is this the case that, when we feel that we are hitting too hard and too fast, it is sometimes a good plan to treat not the actual disease so much as the preliminary symptom, to curb the exuberance of the waggle and let the swing look after itself.

There is not in a general way much amusement or instruction to be derived from watching the professionals' waggle. As a rule they have cut down their preparations to an almost irreducible minimum, and their waggle is scarcely visible—all that remains of a flourish long since atrophied. Even so, it is full of character. Duncan, Ray, Massey and Taylor have almost as little waggle as it is possible to have. By closing my eyes I can summon up the clearest and most entirely distinct picture of each one of them; but I am quite incapable of distinguishing between them in words. A few professionals do possess eminently characteristic waggles. There is Braid, for instance, with that menacing little shake that he

gives to the club head, and Willie Fernie turning over his wrists towards the direction of the hole. Herd, of course, is unforgettable with his dot, dash, dot waggle: first, a fierce little pat of the club head on the ground, then a fierce little look up at the hole, then another pat, and so on till the spectator grows giddy in trying to count them. Mayo, in a quieter and less threatening way, has something of the same mannerism; but it is to be observed that though these two may take a long while to wind themselves up, they always look perfectly confident of being wound up at the right time. Not so many amateurs, and here I write with the deepest feeling. They go on wagglings because they cannot make up their minds to stop at any precise moment. They wind and wind, but something has gone wrong with the machinery so that it never comes to the sticking point.

There is far more variety among our great amateurs, whose waggles are much more elaborate and so more characteristic. There is Mr. Maxwell, for instance, the right shoulder well down, the left shoulder and elbow well up, the arms almost at full stretch and flung far out in front of the body. There is menace indeed: it is positively terrifying. Mr. Hilton is in vivid contrast with the almost meticulously careful planting of the feet—that belongs to him alone—and all the preliminary flourishes of the club, as far as he indulges in them, taking place behind and not in front of the ball. The late Mr. F. G. Tait, again, was quite unique, with that piston-like action of the right arm—a rather ungainly preparation to a most graceful swing, and therefore an exception to prove the rule that the swing imitates the waggle. Mr. John Ball has very little waggle indeed—his is more of a professional style in this respect—neither does Mr. Blackwell waste much time, nor Mr. Laidlay. Mr. Lassen has a waggle entirely his own: indeed I am not sure that he is not unique in not really having a waggle at all. It is not that he is a very rapid player: rather is there something calculating and deliberate about the way in which he settles down to the shot. But he scarcely moves the head of his club at all: he seems to put it in position behind the ball and then take a series of observations of the line and the surrounding scenery. Mr. Gillies, again, has a very deliberate and purposeful waggle, entirely unhurried and without fuss and almost exactly the same whether for a full drive or a mashie shot, which is eminently characteristic.

Of those who have come into particular notice since the war, Mr. Holderness, probably the most brilliant amateur in England at the moment, has a fine slash about his wagglings, foretelling a delightful freedom and vigour of swing. Both Mr. Wethered and Mr. Tolley may be regarded as almost model waggles, in that they get the business over quickly and gracefully and do not vary their procedure from one day or one shot to another.

BERNARD DARWIN.

## PHEASANTS IN PEACE TIME

OWING to the exceptionally mild and fine spring we have been passing through birds are pairing earlier than usual this year, and probably in the case of most estates the question has been decided as to the amount of rearing to be done. The game question is coming up in many different ways. The demand for shooting is as great as ever it was, probably greater. Many new fortunes have been made, and it is a natural consequence of the War that many men who became officers have learned tastes that were dormant in them before. Another side of the picture is that many sportsmen have come to see the vanity of record bags and the greater desirability of the sort of shooting in which their forefathers delighted, namely, that which is obtained by one or two men with a dog and a gun shooting wild birds. Such records as were kept by Lord Holland, for example, show that the bag was ludicrously small in comparison with what is expected on a very modest shoot to-day, but the enjoyment seems to have been equally keen. There will be more of that kind of shooting in future, and as it involves a considerable amount of exercise in the open air, it is highly desirable from the doctor's standpoint. The attitude of the general public to shooting is not unfriendly, and yet demands are put forward of which little was heard before the War. Where cultivation is highly intensive the presence of a large number of pheasants is considered undesirable. The ill-doings of the bird are no doubt in many cases exaggerated, but the feeling exists, and in these democratic days has to be recognised. It may have the effect of diminishing sport in certain districts. It will not be destroyed much, because, fortunately, there is no prejudice against the partridge. This bird, at any rate, is recognised as a friend to agriculture, and during the war it has not suffered to the extent that the pheasant has. Partridges are well accustomed to taking care of themselves, and the poacher, who has multiplied extraordinarily in numbers since Peace was declared, cannot easily get at the partridge, although he can pot the pheasant either by day or by night. Quite a large number of estate owners to whom we have spoken on the subject have declared that not until the financial difficulties of the moment are cleared away will they rear pheasants or have

shoots on the same scale as in pre-War times. On the other hand, they have been agreeably surprised to find that a respectable stock of pheasants can be obtained without artificial rearing. A good keeper who attends to the vermin and collects eggs from nests in exposed places where they would otherwise almost certainly be robbed is able to ensure far better sport than might be imagined by those who pin their faith to rearing. On such estates the farmers have not shown any ill-feeling. They are sportsmen themselves, and, provided that the birds do not swarm over their fields at certain critical times, such as seeding time and harvest, they are quite content to see the estate owner enjoying his sport. It devolves on the latter, however, in such cases to feed the birds and thereby tempt them to remain at home when their visits would be particularly unwelcome to the tenant. Thus it happens that on a proportion of the estates on which rearing would now be in full swing the attention of the owner and his keepers is concentrated on protecting and encouraging as far as possible the wild stock. We do not say that this attitude is by any means universal. There are many pheasant coverts placed so favourably that rearing pheasants on them has no effect whatever on the farm lands, and where this is so the tendency is to revive, as far as possible, pre-war conditions.

The question of vermin is also a vexed one at the present moment. As far as the worst enemy of the pheasant is concerned, there is no difference of opinion. Most people agree that the rat, where his numbers are not kept down, is the greatest and the most mischievous enemy alike to the farmer and the sportsman. The keeper should not only aim at his extermination, but should co-operate in every effort to secure it. Concerning winged depredators, we must confess to feeling a considerable amount of pleasure at the increase of many beautiful and interesting birds during the slacker watchfulness that prevailed in war time. The jay and the magpie are sinners, no doubt, but they are beautiful sinners, and though it may be necessary to shoot one or two of them *pour encourager les autres*, they are so ornamental that it would be criminal to pursue them to the death. So with the hawks and most of the owls that have multiplied exceedingly. One would like to put in a word for them all except the little owl, in whose favour not so much good can be said.



## NATURE NOTES

## SOME DUCK HYBRIDS

**A**S a rule it is unsatisfactory and rather useless to breed hybrids, as they are generally more or less infertile and not pretty. There are, however, exceptions to this rule, and occasionally the results are interesting. On a piece of water in my neighbourhood there has lived for many years (I am afraid to mention an exact number, but it must be something over twenty) a solitary male green-winged teal (*Nettion crecca*). This bird, although slightly pinioned, can fly with ease, but it never leaves its usual abode except when something occurs that frightens it. It then flies right away, but after a couple of hours comes back. This teal seven or eight years ago apparently got tired of being alone, and, not wishing to emigrate in search of a mate of its own species, forced a female pintail to marry him, chasing the rightful husband away. The pintail in due course laid eggs. The eggs were put under a common hen, with the result that two chicks were hatched, of which one grew to maturity. It was a female. It was a small thing, only slightly larger than a pure bred female green-winged teal, but it was much lighter in colour, resembling in this respect a female pintail. When it was full grown it was put on the same piece of water where the male green-winged teal, its father, lived, and in course of time the two found each other and were "happy ever after."

During several springs the hybrid female disappeared for some weeks, apparently sitting on a brood of eggs, but nothing resulting, the eggs must either have been infertile or have been robbed by some vermin. Last spring we took some pains to find the nest when the bird had again disappeared, and the result was that the bird was found sitting on five eggs. The eggs were taken and put under a bantam hen, and all hatched. The chicks all grew to maturity. When they were full grown I decided, by listening to their voices, that in the lot of five there was only *one* male, and this bird has now acquired its breeding dress. I was not a little surprised to find that this breeding dress is exactly identical with that of a pure bred green-winged teal, and also that in the size there is no difference. Three of the four females closely resemble pure female green-winged teal, but one of them is much lighter in colour. This bird was different from the others from the beginning. When a chick in down it was greyish and black, while the others were yellowish and black. It seems remarkable that the influence of the pintail was so very soon lost in four of the five hybrids. Accidentally some more hybrid ducks were bred in another spring.

In 1911, being in Buenos Ayres, I bought in a bird shop two specimens of the T. Am. yellow-billed teal (*Nettion flavirostris*), which is a common bird in Chile and the Argentine Republic. They were in a box with a number of yellow-billed pintails (*Dafila spinicauda*), and the good woman who offered them for sale was much astonished that I preferred the small teals to the bigger pintails, which she thought much more of on account of their larger size. However, the small teal I took, and they were so terribly dirty that I had to wash them thoroughly as soon as I got them to the ship. During the cleaning process I noticed that both birds had broken wings, so that I suppose they had been shot at and had been obtained in that way. The birds came to Holland without mishap, but, unfortunately, proved to be both males. Last spring one of them paired with a female South African red-billed teal. Eggs were laid and two young were hatched, which both grew to maturity. These hybrids are rather pretty birds. The style of markings of the plumage mostly resembles that of the yellow-billed father, but the coloration resembles that of the mother. The bills are marked with a very pale pinkish spot on each side.

In connection with my breeding of hybrids it is perhaps of interest to note that I have found that hybrids which are sterile *inter se* are perfectly fertile when bred to one of the pure bred parent species.

F. E. BLAAUW.

## EARTHWORMS IN FLOODED FIELDS.

After a long spell of very wet weather I was walking one evening through some fields where the heaviness of the soil had prevented the water from draining away quickly and much of the ground was flooded. As I went splashing through the mud and water I became aware of another sound in addition to the loud "squelching" from my boots. Always immediately after I put each foot on the ground I could distinctly hear a succession of curious short, sucking sounds, not unlike the spitting of a cat. As it was almost dark I could not at first ascertain the cause of the strange sounds, but at last I discovered that they were made by the earthworms which had come partially out of their burrows, owing, no doubt, to the rain having flooded them. I judged that all the worms within a radius of at least two yards hastily retired when they felt the earth vibrating under my footsteps. There must have been many thousands of these creatures, because the field was a very large one and they were out over the whole area. Owing to having been much used for drilling purposes the field was almost bare of grass and so the worms could be easily seen. I have frequently noticed in my own garden this

extreme sensitiveness of earthworms to vibrations, and the same thing may also be well seen in some of the city squares, where the worms often come up in great numbers on warm, humid evenings. C.

## THE HUNTING TACTICS OF MAGPIES.

The magpie displays the greatest intelligence in its hunting tactics and is always amusing, whether it is in the pursuit of worms and insects or of less legitimate prey. My house stands on the hillside, facing a wide valley, and flanked on either side by clumps of trees that are locally called woods, the clumps consisting of from a dozen to twenty large beeches. Each clump possess a huge magpie's nest that apparently grows larger every year, and at all times of the day I can look out of my windows and watch the magpies hunting. Naturally, most of their time is devoted to breaking up bits of cow dung in order to secure the worms and grubs that lurk underneath. In this way they do a considerable amount of good to the land, but, alas! as soon as the days grow warmer the bunnies appear, and between hunting bunnies and robbing the nests, the magpies are extremely happy. The insect getting is forgotten in the ardour of the chase.

The surface of the top fields is always higher than the lower, the soil being kept in place by a high retaining wall surmounted by a rough fence composed of ancient and much gnarled hawthorn, and rough stakes and rails, and under this fence the rabbits have excavated a number of burrows. In the early spring the field is often dotted by tiny rabbits playing or nibbling the grass.

This is the time the magpies are much in evidence. If a solitary magpie sees a bunny emerge, it immediately flops upon the railings over the mouth of the burrow, and shrieks discordantly for its mate to come and join in the hunting. In a very short time the mate arrives, and perhaps one or two more magpies accompany him, while a few passing rooks and jackdaws will assemble in the trees overlooking the field and make remarks, evidently cheering the hunters on. I have never seen the rooks taking part in the hunt, but they appear to applaud vigorously.

The plan of campaign is very simple. The magpie on the railing remains on guard, while the new arrival hops towards the bunny, endeavouring to get between it and the burrow. If possible, it will give the bunny a dig with its bill if it can approach close enough. The bunny makes a dash for the burrow, but is headed off by the magpie on guard. Then it darts off across the field, only to be driven back by the magpie on the outside, the latter getting in a vicious jab with its beak whenever it can. The poor little creature rushes, first in one direction, then in another, but always finds the magpie ready to stop him, until at last, frightened into a semi-unconscious state, it crouches under a tuft of grass, and both magpies peck vigorously at the back of its neck till the backbone is severed. Then they pluck all the fur off and proceed to make a meal.

I have often rescued the bunnies, and they are so terrified that they will lie passively on my hand until I literally push them into their burrow. Only once have I seen a bunny escape from its foes, and that one made for the gate in the retaining wall, refused to be headed off, and gained the back entrance of the burrow before the magpies could stop it. Or, perhaps I should say, the little bunny refused to be stopped, but with head held down plunged doggedly onwards.

The killing is a slow process, as the magpies do not seem to be able to give a sudden killing blow. I saw them pecking at something, dead as I thought, in the long grass for two hours, and when I went to see what they had there I found a tiny bunny, still alive, although the magpies had pecked a large hole and the bones of the neck were quite bare.

A day or two ago I was the amused spectator of a mouse hunt. A tiny field mouse was basking in the sunshine on the top of the wall that retains the earth from falling into the lane. A magpie flying across saw it and pounced, but the mouse darted downwards between the stones that formed the wall. The magpie fluttered down the face of the wall, peering into the crevices. Then, catching sight of the mouse in the heart of the wall at the foot, it prodded energetically into the hollows with its beak. Naturally, the mouse ran upwards, apparently through the whole length of the 10ft. wall, the magpie following its progress, climbing up the face of the wall much in the same way as a parrot would, all the time darting its beak into the holes between the stones in a vain endeavour to capture the mouse. In the end the mouse appeared in sight on the top of the wall, and the magpie made a sudden dash upwards, while the mouse did the disappearing trick again. The whole process was repeated twice; then the magpie summoned its mate, which, however, did not come in answer to the call. The magpie gazed at the wall attentively for a few minutes, as if calculating the chances of a capture, then, considering that it was useless trying to catch the mouse without help, it flew away. Later in the day I saw the two magpies investigating the wall, but the mouse was not at home or had sought safer quarters. H. T. C.